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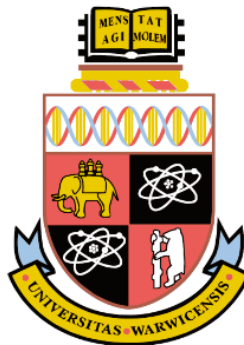
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EU-Russia Energy Relations : A Discursive Approach

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Politics and International Studies



The University of Warwick

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Coventry, 5 October 2009, cloudy weather. I am seated on an old fashioned bus which drives me to my new accommodation. 'This city looks like East Germany of the 50s', I keep repeating to myself. Bus number 12 drops me with my big orange suitcase in Westwood Road and a five-year journey lay ahead of me.

As these lines are flowing out through my writing, I realise that I have been waiting for this exact moment for five years, firmly believing that sooner or later it would arrive. There is no doubt that this has been the toughest and most challenging experience of my life. Extremely long and stressful at times ...but also captivating and rewarding at others. The satisfaction of making a finding is such an exciting emotion...as well as frustrating when you realise that a remote author has already made the same finding and written about it!

Undertaking such a path requires self-discipline and huge motivation. They are essential drivers that fuel you when the passion fades away. Along this lonely path, blackout periods might sometimes arise and unexpectedly strike you. A deep feeling of loneliness surrounds your broken torch and you ...a researcher desperately looking for a bloody hole in the literature ...you feel like having heard the same analysis, having drawn the same conclusions as the others. You stumble upon the same clues while desperately looking for a new finding. 'There must be one', you keep repeating over and over again, there must be one, but you simply cannot find it!

Along your way, you can feel alone yet you must never forget the previous walkers and their experience. You must understand that your loneliness is also part of a common experience and you are adding your part to it. Whatever the challenge is, you will always find some helpful support, some handy lights enabling you to keep on walking without stopping.

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Declaration

This thesis is my own work and has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

Abstract

Much of the rationalist literature in International Relations explains the nature of the EU-Russia energy relationship by assuming that tensions evident in the relationship are a product of the actors' distinct interests. In contrast, for conventional constructivists any tension is seen to derive from the essentially different identities of the actors. Conversely, existing discourse-based accounts analyze the construction of competing energy discourses or how the different approaches of the EU and Russia are indicative of a struggle for 'Europe'.

This thesis aims to contribute to the discourse-based literature by adding a focus on how energy discourses between Self and Other are constructed in the first place. This implies an understanding of discourses as socially constructed and 'sedimented'. Deploying a framework drawn from Wæver the thesis identifies a tripartite and layered discursive structure through which key discourses are both 'sedimented' and can be studied.

Layer one investigates the historical narratives and representations that Western Europe and Russia have constructed to represent each other; layer two investigates how the EU and Russia have constructed their energy paradigms and how actors have used these paradigms in their mutual energy relations. This layer also examines the extent to which the historical narratives and representations of layer one are reflected in the mutual energy relations between the EU and Russia. Layer three focuses on discursive practices (e.g. statements, written texts or symbolic acts) and examines how the discursive structure made up of layer one (historical narratives and representations) and layer two (energy paradigms) is played out in the debates over the Nabucco / South Stream pipeline competition and in the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue.

The study of EU-Russia energy relations through 'sedimented' discourses provides the basis for arguing that actors' positions alternate between cooperation and confrontation, rather than continually interacting in an assumed ever-present tension.

The political implications that emerge from conceptualizing EU-Russia energy relations as a Self/Other discursive interaction are that a deeper discursive contest underlies EU-Russia energy relations. Such a contest sheds light on the mutual construction of actors' identity, and on their construction of 'Europe' as a political project.

List of Abbreviations

CERM	Coordinated Emergency Response Mechanism
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
EC	European Commission
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
ECT	Energy Charter Treaty
ED	EU–Russia Energy Dialogue
EEC	European Economic Community
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EP	European Parliament
EPE	Energy Policy for Europe
EU	European Union
FPC	Foreign Policy Concept
IEA	International Energy Agency
IEF	International Energy Forum
IEP	International Energy Programme
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IR	International Relations
JODI	Joint Oil Data Initiative
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MI	Market and Institutions
MS	Member States
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NIS	Newly Independent States
OAPEC	Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries
PCA	Partnership and Cooperation Agreements
PSAs	Production Sharing Agreements
RE	Regions and Empire
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SEP	Samenwerkende Elektriciteits Productiebedrijven

TEN-E	Trans-European Networks – Energy
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
UN	United Nations
WTO	World Trade Organisation

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1 Introduction

EU- Russia relations have been the subject of a number of analyses aiming to understand the nature and the possible developments of this complex relationship. In particular, energy represents a crucial issue in the broader context of EU-Russia relations. Rationalist approaches have long dominated the understanding of both broad EU-Russia relations and their specific energy relations. These accounts lack dynamism and fail to explain the process through which social reality and foreign policy are constructed. Conventional constructivism, most clearly identified in the work of Wendt¹, has pointed out the flawed rationalist view of the nature of social reality and has emphasised the importance of identity in inter-subjective relations. However, whilst this focus on identity is to be welcomed, conventional constructivism's explanatory potential has been curtailed insofar as it has remained state-centric in its focus.

This chapter provides a critique of rationalist and conventional constructivist approaches to International Relations (IR) and is located within a critical constructivist tradition that draws from post-structuralism. Given the combined use of elements of critical constructivism and post-structuralism, it is important to clarify the link between the two. Critical constructivist approaches to foreign policy focus on the mutual identity construction that occurs in the discursive Self/Other interaction through the 'othering' process. Post-structuralism draws from this theoretical background and adds a focus on actors' discursive contestation for hegemony over political projects. In particular, the post-structuralist approach of this research relies on the discursive framework elaborated by Laclau and Mouffe who hold that meaning and its borders are constructed through discursive antagonism. As such, constituting discursive antagonism is a necessary condition for the imposition of a political project.

This research, therefore, employs a critical constructivist/post-structuralist approach to the case of EU-Russia energy relations and aims to understand what this energy relationship tells us about EU-Russia relations in general and about their construction of 'Europe' as a political project. It follows that the actors' debates around their energy relationship may have much wider political meanings compared to what usually is

¹ Alexander Wendt was one amongst others, e.g. Nicholas Onuf, Richard K. Ashley, Friedrich Kratochwil, John Ruggie.

made apparent, while it is also argued that, to some extent, the energy relationship itself is framed by identity politics.

It follows that EU-Russian energy relations are here viewed as an inter-subjective interaction between Self and Other, advancing discursive representations of each other. The advantage of viewing this relation as a Self/Other interaction is that it helps understand how actors have discursively constructed cooperative and conflicting positions; it also illustrates the meaning of energy for the broader relationship between the EU (Western Europe) and Russia and for the construction of Europe as a political project. In this light, the main research question is:

- Can self-other discursive interactions explain the alternation between cooperative and conflicting positions in EU-Russia energy relations?

In order to address this research question, this introductory chapter will first engage with the relevant literature to locate the thesis within IR debates. Subsequently, a review of the existing discursive literature on EU-Russia energy relations will demonstrate how it is overly focused on ‘energy policy discourses’, thereby failing to explain EU-Russia energy relations in regard to historical narratives, mutual representations and the constitutive power of outsiders.

The rationalist approach to IR, as most clearly epitomised in neorealist and neoliberal approaches will be explored. It will be noted that rationalism is mainly concerned with discovering universal laws of rational behaviour and, thus, addressing the ‘why’ question – as opposed to the ‘how’ one. In other words, rationalist approaches are interested in ‘why’ questions, which call for causal types of explanations (e.g. why did a specific fact/event happen). Constructivist approaches are focused more on ‘how’ questions such as how a given option became possible in the first place, or how a given matter was understood in a specific way. For example, rationalism would investigate the causes that led states such as the UK or China to opt for nuclear power. Constructivists instead would explore ‘how’ nuclear became an option – among others – for the

security of these states. Or, it would analyse how the nuclear equipment of the UK and China, although similarly potentially harmful, was understood differently by the US.² In addition, the rationalist account treats actors' identity and interests as given, and thus external to the investigation.

Next section presents the main assumptions of conventional constructivism and its understanding of identity. In doing so, this analysis will mainly refer to the work of Alexander Wendt, considered one of the fathers of conventional constructivism. Therefore, this thesis will use Wendtian constructivism and conventional constructivism interchangeably. It will be noted how Wendtian constructivism is still grounded in a rationalist tradition and is fundamentally state-centric. In fact, Wendt studies interaction among states that are charged with a clearly identifiable identity that produces effects on actors' behaviours. This makes possible the formation of a collective identity that expands unilaterally to include the identity of other states. Ultimately, identity remains fixed and unproblematised. Therefore, the following section analyses the problems of conventional constructivist understandings of identity. In contrast, critical constructivism focuses its analysis on the origin and reproduction of identity rather than on its impact. In order to study the identity formation of Self, it is necessary to draw boundaries with Other through the 'othering' process. It emerges that Other holds a constitutive power towards Self and vice versa. In addition the 'othering' process towards Other (critical constructivism), unfolds in discursive practices in which competing views of Other compete for discursive hegemony (post-structuralism). Thus, in order to understand how the critical understanding of identity addresses the gaps of the conventional constructivist approach, it is necessary to illustrate the limitations of the latter.

This theoretical analysis provides the basis for examining the different ways in which mainstream IR approaches and critical constructivist/post-structuralist approaches have accounted for EU-Russia relations.

Similarly, this chapter will provide an overview of the main strands of the literature on EU-Russia energy relations. The literature on EU-Russia energy relations has started to

² A., Wendt, Constructing International Politics, *International Security*, Vol. 20, No.1, 1995, pp. 71–81, quoted by A.M., Slaughter, International Relations. Principal Theory, in R., Wolfrum, eds., *Max Planck Encyclopedia of Public International Law*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Available from: http://www.princeton.edu/~slaughtr/Articles/722_IntlRelPrincipalTheories_Slaughter_20110509zG.pdf Accessed 30/12/2013

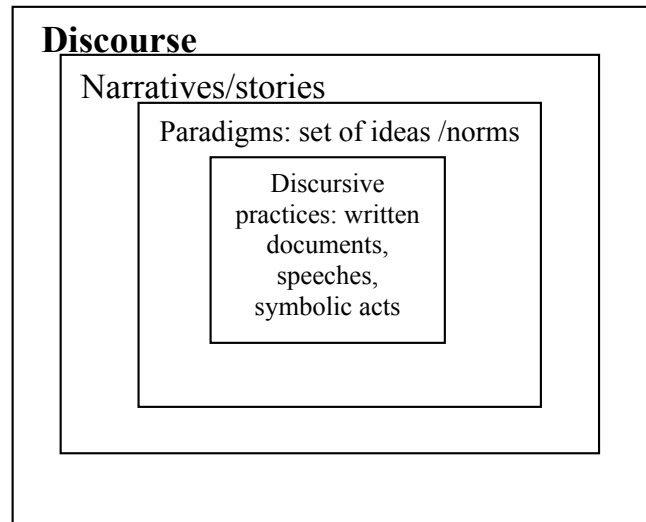
move away from strict rationalism and conventional constructivism towards explanations that focus on the discursive dimension of such a complex relation. Since these discourse-based approaches are the main contenders of this study, the arguments and limitations of such approaches will be presented in more detail as a way to understand how this study fits in.

The thesis aims to be located close to the works of Aalto and Morozov since these authors attempt to shed light on the fact that EU-Russia energy relations have a socio-political determinant and are ultimately related to the political construction of 'Europe'.³ Both rely on social (e.g. discourse), rather than material factors but they have not sufficiently focused on how the discursive contestation occurs, how the 'othering' process unfolds in actors' discourses, and how the 'degree of Otherness' and historical representations of Self in relation to Other can explain the alternation between actors' cooperative and conflicting positions. In particular, through the adaptation and application of a layered discursive structure – initially proposed by Ole Wæver – to the case of energy, this research ultimately aspires to build a three-layered framework to grasp the structure of meaning underlying EU-Russia energy relations. The basic assumption of the structure is that the overall meaning held by each discourse is 'sedimented'. In other words, it results from the overlapping of sub-levels of meanings. These sub-levels taken together define the overall meaning of the discourse itself (see diagrams below).

Wæver's three-layered structure offers the occasion to briefly make some clarifications related to the terminology used. The terms narrative and story are used interchangeably. A narrative/story refers to a representation of a circumstance (e.g. actors' relationship) that emerges from a specific ordering and selection of historical events in a way that produces a unified meaning. A paradigm refers to a set of ideas and norms that define a way of viewing a specific policy field (e.g. energy). The term discursive practice indicates the actual expression of a thought (in written or spoken form) or a symbolic action. The relation between discursive practice, paradigm, and narrative/story is pyramidal. The discursive practice is more directly accessible to the audience – in written or spoken – forms and echoes a specific paradigm. The latter is, in turn, justified

³ V., Morozov, Energy Dialogue and the future of Russia: politics and economics in the struggle for Europe, in P., Aalto, eds, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe's future energy security*, Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2008, p.59

through, and grounded in a broader historical narrative context. In the context of this thesis, the degree of sedimentation of a discourse can be described as follows:



Drawing from the three-layered structure proposed by Wæver, each layer investigates a specific semiotic concept. Therefore, the most basic layer investigates the narrative/story of relations between Western Europe (EU) and Russia in a historical perspective. Scaling down the layered structure, the second layer focuses on the energy paradigms that the EU and Russia have adopted. Layer three switches the focus from theoretical investigation to actual policy analysis and illustrates how official representatives of the EU and Russia have in practice used paradigm in a consistent way with the broader narrative/story informing relations between Western Europe and Russia. Such a structure enables one to discover the broader political meaning underlying EU-Russia energy relations.

Layer one

Narratives/stories of relations between Western Europe/EU and Russia in historical perspective.
Mutual historical representations.

Layer two

EU's and Russia's energy paradigms

Layer three

Discursive practices in the context of
a) Nabucco-South Stream pipeline politics b) EU-Russia Energy Dialogue.

2 Rationalism and the Constructivist Critique

As this thesis is located in the broad constructivist tradition, the aim of this section is to present and reject the assumptions of rationalist approaches, introduce the key debate within the constructivist tradition - between conventional and critical constructivism - and explain why this thesis sits on the critical / post-structuralist side of this debate.

Rationalism relies on empirical epistemology according to which validation or falsification are the methodologies to understand reality, which is fixed and follows an immutable logic. Rationalism also holds that decision-makers and states are cost-benefit maximisers who act according to a 'logic of consequentiality'.⁴ Interests and identities are exogenously given and thus, are external to the investigation. In the discipline of IR, neo-realism and neo-liberalism are the key approaches rooted in a rationalist tradition. They mainly focus on a state-level analysis and assume that states are self-interested and power maximisers (in military and economic terms) acting in an anarchic international arena. The anarchic international context – meaning there is an absence of an overall sovereign authority to enforce agreements – is taken to be of fundamental importance for neorealist approaches in particular. For them anarchy turns inter-state relations into a zero-sum game between states inherently distrustful of each other. In this respect anarchy is also seen to elicit a determining influence on the nature of state interests and identities. In an anarchic environment the dominant state interest is, for neorealists, a question of power accumulation, while in terms of identity states are necessarily socialised through the competitive process to become like-units, differentiated only in terms of the variable distribution of material capabilities.⁵ Anarchy is seen to dominate international politics and to determine that states' principal interest is to ensure its security.

Neoliberalism shares basic Realist assumptions concerning the anarchic nature of international politics, the egoistic ethos of states that act to preserve their security and augment their material positions, and that distrust characterizes relations between states.

⁴ J.G., March, and J.P., Olsen, *Rediscovering institutions. The organizational basis of politics*, New York: Free Press, 1989, p.23

⁵ K.N., Waltz, *Theory of international politics*, New York: McGraw-Hill Inc., 1979

Yet, differently from neorealism, by drawing on microeconomic principles and game theory, neoliberalism concludes that cooperation between states is possible. According to Keohane, cooperation is a rational, self-interested option for states to seek.⁶ Realists counter-argue that states are inclined to deceive, thus, cooperation is possible only in the presence of a powerful state. Neoliberals, reply instead that institutions – norms and policy-making rules that contribute to the formation of expectations – create the conditions for cooperation to occur. In addition, neorealism aims to analyse international politics and phenomena through the metaphor of ‘equilibrium’ and the ‘balance of power’ with actors looking for stability, whereas for neoliberalism, institutions and actors’ cooperation ensure the stability of the international system. Also, in the neoliberal tradition, economic wealth rather than security is actors’ main interest.

Despite these differences, neorealism and neoliberalism neglect normative and identity-based issues. By positing a scenario in which anarchy is the main determinant of actors’ interests, it turns out that actors’ identity might also exist but it is completely irrelevant and taken as given. As a consequence, actors are dislocated from their historical background while cultural differences between them are discounted as causally meaningless.⁷ The focus of rationalist research aims, therefore, to explore actors’ rational behaviours triggered by the broader and immutable international structure.

Constructivism challenges the assumptions of rationalism, particularly the notion of an unchanging reality of international politics that is taken to frame the scope of what constitutes rational behaviour. As noted, rationalism is an acontextual, acultural and static approach that treats agents as largely interchangeable utility maximisers. Constructivism instead places great emphasis on changes through interaction, the social construction of reality, the ‘consolidatory’ effects of practices, and explores the reasons for tensions existing between partners. While rationalism might accept that interests change as a result of shifts in the incentive structure of the balance of power, constructivism argues instead that interests change through inter-subjective agent-agent relations and dialectical agent-structure relations. Things are perceived as objective and

⁶ R.O., Keohane, *After hegemony: cooperation and discord in the world political economy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984

⁷ R., Price, and C., Reus-Smit, Dangerous liaisons? Critical international theory and constructivism, *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol.4, No.3, 1998, p.273

become social fact based on ‘human agreement’ as long as this agreement exists.⁸ By evolving and assigning new meanings to cooperation or conflict, interacting partners produce new realities and establish new structural and institutional conditions. Hence, anarchy is not seen as an unavoidable feature of international politics but is, in Wendt’s words, ‘what states make of it’.⁹ Wendt’s popular expression indicates that the notion of self-help as defined by realists (and mainly by Waltz) originates from the interaction of the units in the system, and not from anarchy. This conception conflicts with the structural, deterministic argument that realists put forward in which anarchy is the crucial explanatory variable that drives interactions.

This last point refers to structural and deterministic rationalist theories which are described in opposition to constructivism. In order to understand the main arguments of the competing theories, the next section will further illustrate the principles and shortcomings of two rationalist theories: neorealism and neoliberalism. The understanding of identity will become clear through analysis of the two approaches that have dominated IR as well as EU-Russia (energy) relations.

2.1 Neorealism and Neoliberalism

Structural rationalist theories hold the concept of structure at the core of their explanation of international politics. They believe that such a structure (rather than the power and status characteristics of actors in the system) influence states’ behaviours. It follows that the main hypothesis of these approaches is that the identification of the structure of the system indicates the behaviour of states within that system.

Neorealist approaches are rooted in a materialist ontology. The realist matrix led to a conception of the international structure as accountable for states’ interests, which are, in turn, considered as given. Ideas of actors are regarded as derived from interests. Consequently, the structural constraints faced by actors are the main focus of the neorealist account, as what constitutes rational behaviour for actors is taken as fixed and dependent on structures. In the neorealist view, anarchy is a self-help system in which

⁸ M., Barnett, Social constructivism, in J., Baylis and S., Smith, eds., *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 3rd eds., p. 253

⁹ A., Wendt, Anarchy is What States Make of It, *International Organization*, Vol. 46 No.2, Spring 1992a, pp. 391-425

states are induced to act egoistically. Unlike traditional realism which views states' behaviour as being directed by its self-interested nature, Waltz holds that structure determines the behaviour of the states. As a result, only changes in the structure impact on international politics.¹⁰ Anarchy constrains identity so extensively that it is reduced to merely a secondary factor.

Waltz also illustrates why the anarchic international structure reproduces itself. By rejecting the hierarchical order of domestic politics, the neorealist anarchic system lacks any centralised organisation to arbitrate over disputes.¹¹ The absence of a central authority leads to a self-help attitude among states that compete for survival and security through military power. Although all are concerned with self-security, the distribution of capabilities among states is unequal and shifting. This defines the relative power of states and reflects a variation in the balance of power.

In a scenario of constant competition in an anarchic world, states only have two choices: balance or bandwagon. As such neorealists are divided on whether balancing or bandwagoning behaviour is more likely. The first group argues that states in an anarchic context are inclined to balance, that is ally 'against' threatening powers. The second group holds that, states ally themselves 'with' the most powerful state.¹² Similarly, in the broader realist literature, the anarchic nature of the international system contributed to the development of two versions of neorealism. Waltz is a 'defensive' realist since states are seen as mainly aiming to preserve what they have rather than attempt to achieve more.¹³ Conversely, Mearsheimer's 'offensive' realism stresses how the anarchic nature of the international structure produces power-seeking states that aim to achieve a regional or global hegemonic position.¹⁴

In both versions, cooperation and interdependence are limited because states mainly pay attention to the relative rather than the absolute gains that any cooperation might

¹⁰ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p.108

¹¹ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p.88

¹² S. M., Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, New York: Cornell University Press, 1987, p. 17

On 'balancing' see also A., Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p.102

¹³ S., Rynning and S., Guzzini, *Realism and Foreign Policy Analysis*, Copenhagen: COPRI Working Papers 42, 2001, p.8

¹⁴ J. J., Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2003

See also Thomas Diez, Ingvild Bode, Aleksandra Fernandes da Costa, *Key concepts of International Relations*, London: Sage Publication, 2011, pp.181-185

produce.¹⁵ Overall, Waltzian neorealism tended to overlook ‘reductionist’ explanations of international relations at the ‘unit’ or state level and he initiated a debate over the importance of international ‘structure’.¹⁶ Subsequently Gilpin and Krasner extended structural realism to international political economy and ‘hegemonic stability theory’. They both argued that the distribution of power among states determines the openness and stability of the international economy defined as the main dependent variable.¹⁷ From this perspective, a powerful hegemon is needed to preserve such an open and stable international economic structure.¹⁸

While neorealism postulates that the anarchic structure induces states to adopt a self-help attitude, neoliberal inspired theorists have advanced the idea that interdependence and institutional factors can govern rational structuralism. By departing from realist assumptions – such as anarchy, self-help among states and state-centrism – Keohane puts forward an institutionalist version of structuralism. He argues that in a world with no hegemonic power, institutions or ‘institutional regimes’ make cooperation among actors possible. International regimes can substitute for government and promote decentralised cooperation among selfish actors.¹⁹ The literature on international economic structure believes, in general, that national policy choices derive from the international economic structure rather than from the political one. From this perspective, Katzenstein contended that the change in the structure of the world economy accounts for states’ orientation and role in international politics. Within such a structure, big states have some scope of manoeuvre to make their impact, whereas small states are obliged to adapt accordingly.²⁰ In ‘Power and Interdependence’, Keohane and Nye²¹ developed the concept of complex interdependence to indicate the increasingly crucial role of transnational relations and asymmetrical dependencies among states in the world’s structure, to the detriment of military power. An implication of complex interdependence is that factors such as the degree of international interdependence and

¹⁵ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp.105-106

¹⁶ C., Brown, *Understanding International Relations*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Publishing, 2005, pp.40-43

¹⁷ H., Milner, International Political Economy: Beyond Hegemonic Stability, *Foreign Policy*, No. 110, Spring 1998, p.113

¹⁸ J., Kunkel, *Realism and Postwar US Trade Policy*, Pacific Economic Paper, No.285, Australia-Japan Research Centre, November 1998, p.4.

¹⁹ R.O., Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*

²⁰ P., Katzenstein, *Small States in World Markets*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985

²¹ R.O Keohane, and J., Nye, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*, New York: Little Brown and Company, 1997

the degree of institutionalisation of international rules do not differ from one state to another according to their internal features but are structural characteristics.

Waltz neglects international economic processes and institutions that can also affect states' behaviour. According to the literature on international economic structure, analysing states' position in the international division of labour can shed light on actors' preferences.²² The argument of scholars dealing with economic interdependence is that the international system represents both a world economy and a system of states.²³

The arguments of economic structuralists draw insights from neorealist assumptions concerning the self-interested nature of states and the imperatives of self-help. What neoliberalism adds is that these assumptions are also evident in the individualistic nature of the economic market.

Similarly to neorealism, neoliberalism holds state identities and interests to be given a priori and exogenously determined. In the light of these assumptions, it is not surprising that both theories share the same critiques concerning the a priori nature of identity and interests. As mentioned, the utilitarian perspective is also a characteristic of neoliberal theory through which it is possible to assign a marginal role to ideational factors. This is because the logic of each agent's action is a rationalist one; therefore the analysis of ideas is irrelevant.

2.2 Conventional Constructivism

Neorealism and neoliberalism attribute a regulative role to the structural factor, while treating identities and interests as constant. This makes it possible to isolate the causal role of power – for neorealism – and international institutions – for neoliberalism. The emphasis placed on the constraints of structure tells us why these theories cannot explain specific dynamics of international politics. The fact that an anarchic system determines the egoistic identity of the units erases the possibilities for states to live in a

²² S., Haggard, *Structuralism and its Critics in Progress* in E., Adler, and B., Crawford, eds., *International Relations*, New York, Oxford: Columbia University Press, 1991, p. 37

²³ From a Marxist-oriented perspective, Wallerstein defines world-systems as a 'social system, one that has boundaries, structure, members groups, rules of legitimation, and coherence'. The capitalist world-system and its location within the structure determine the options available to states. See G. Ritzer, Z. Atalay, (eds), *Reading in globalization: Key concepts and major debates*, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2010, p. 205

world different from self-help. This implies a clear lack of agency that is contested by constructivists. In fact, by conceptualising identities as formed through interaction, constructivists open the possibility for systemic changes. In addition, for constructivists, assuming an egoistic identity does not help our understanding of systemic changes and it is not necessarily accurate because identities are formed and not given. Therefore, Waltz cannot explain systemic changes, as he allows little room for agency.²⁴

As a consequence of recognising that interaction influences outcomes, the social world is perceived as constructed, not given. States may be self-interested but they constantly (re)define themselves in interaction with others. This implies that their identity and normative preferences may change and produce different meanings as a result. The relevance of inter-subjective meaning rather than material structure is therefore one key aspect in understanding the detachment from rationalism. In other words, actors' identities are not fixed but are developed, sustained and changed in interaction. While rationalism may admit that behaviours change, it essentially considers identity and interests as external and prior to the process of international politics. In contrast constructivists aim to demonstrate that identity may change through interaction and that this matters. By failing to grasp the complex process of change and evolution occurring in the interaction between actors (e.g. EU and Russia), rationalist approaches emphasise 'being' over 'becoming'. As a result, they lack 'dynamism' and thus, they deny space to identity formation and subjectivity since actors are expected to behave 'rationally' and in response to the relevant structure.²⁵

In respect of the debate within IR, the constructivist tradition introduces an innovative approach, arguing that dynamics of international politics are socially constructed rather than resulting from the egoistic nature of states or the anarchic architecture of international politics. This represents the key principle from which a number of constructivist approaches have developed. In this respect, the main divide within constructivism is that between conventional/mainstream constructivism on one side, and critical constructivism/ post-structuralism on the other.

This section will illustrate the main claims of conventional constructivism, placing a particular focus on how identity is investigated. This is important in order to understand the limitations of conventional constructivism and the advantage of a critical/post-

²⁴ J., Mercer Anarchy and Identity, *International Organization*, Vol. 49, No. 2, Spring 1995, pp. 229-252

²⁵ Adler and Crawford, *International Relations*, p.43

structuralist approach to identity. Conventional constructivism builds a bridge between rationalism on the one hand, and more reflexive approaches that interpret events and process rather than empirical data on the other hand.²⁶ The merit of conventional constructivism is to introduce an emphasis on Self/Other interaction in the study of international politics.

The most influential figure in respect of conventional/mainstream constructivist analysis within IR is Alexander Wendt and as such this section draws heavily upon his work.

Wendt challenges neorealism, arguing that identities and interests are not given. Similarly, he argues international politics is not necessarily a self-help system. The neorealist concept of self-help derives, he contends, from the interaction of units (states) in the system and not from anarchy. This opens the possibility that interaction can also originate from a different structure other than anarchy. In particular, Wendt argues that there is nothing determining about anarchy and that anarchy can support different cultures – be they Hobbesian, Lockean or Kantian.²⁷

Given that interaction determines the principle underlying the international structure, it emerges that process, rather than structure is the factor to focus on. The neorealist anarchic structure is no longer the key explanatory variable that drives interaction. Neoliberalism has tried to explain cooperation by focusing on process, but it failed to accurately explore systemic variables. Wendt, instead, introduces actors' identities and interests as variables. Therefore, he argues that neoliberalism and conventional constructivism should be combined to analyse how systems explain state identity, preferences and interests.

Wendtian constructivism is located, therefore, within the broader debate between rationalism and reflectivism. The rationalist assumption that agents' identities and interests are given is thus rejected.

Against this background, Wendt's aim is to develop a 'via media' between these two traditions.²⁸ By focussing on process and inter-subjective interaction, it emerges that collective meaning – rather than material factors – constitutes the underlying principle

²⁶ E., Adler, Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics, *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol.3, No.3, 1997, p. 323

²⁷ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, pp. 246-313

²⁸ A., Wendt, Collective Identity Formation and the International State, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 88, No.2, 1994, pp. 384-396

As said, rationalism believes that reality can be understood and accessed through reason and assumptions about its rational structure. Conversely reflectivism interprets events and process rather than empirical data.

of the structure. By participating in collective meanings, actors acquire identities, which Wendt defined as ‘relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about [the] self’.²⁹ Identity, he argued, is a ‘property of international actors that generates motivational and behavioural dispositions’.³⁰ Conceptualising identities is crucial because they provide the basis for understanding interests. Interests, in turn, are involved in the process of defining situations. Focusing on the relation between interests and identity, a world in which identity and interests are learned and sustained by inter-subjectively grounded practice – carried out by states in their interactions – is one in which ‘anarchy is what states make of it’. This famous expression means that states are actively involved in constructing the nature of anarchy, which is not given a priori. Rather, as Brown argued, anarchy is subject to and conditioned by state actions.³¹ This implies that there can be various kinds of anarchy. The kind of anarchy that prevails depends on the conception of security the actors have, on how they articulate their identities in relation to others. Notions of anarchy ‘differ in the extent to which and in the manner in which Self is identified cognitively with Other, and it is upon this cognitive variation that the meaning of anarchy and the distribution of power depends’.³² Positive identification with other states may lead them to perceive security threats not as a private issue for each state but as a collective responsibility. It follows that if the collective Self prevails between a group of states, practices in the security field will be altruistic. Wendt thus studies identity, analysing whether and under which conditions identities are more collective or more egoistic. On the basis of where states are positioned in this range from positive to negative identification with other states, a state will be willing or not to implement collective security measures. Hence, for Wendtian constructivism, identity is crucial to the evolution of a different understanding of anarchy. In short, identity determines the ‘culture of anarchy’.³³

As mentioned, Wendt goes on to argue that identity provides a category which may be subject to change but which at the same time is ‘relatively stable’. In Wendtian terms,

²⁹ Wendt, *Anarchy is What States Make of It*, p.397

³⁰ A., Wendt, Level of Analysis vs Agents and Structure: Part III, *Review of International Studies*, Vol.18, No., 1992b, pp. 181-185

³¹ Brown, *Understanding International Relations*, p.49

³² Wendt, *Level of Analysis vs Agents and Structure: Part III*, p.184

³³ M., Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 40-41

‘identities may be hard to change but they are not carved in stone’.³⁴ The change of identity requires social learning. Ego/Self, in fact, may decide to engage in new practices. As this new behaviour affects the partner in interaction, this implies a pressure on Alter/Other to behave in a new way as well. In this respect, when in interaction Self presents Other with a new role, Wendt refers to it as ‘altercasting’, a process through which Self encourages Other to acquire a new identity.³⁵

However, it can be argued that mainstream constructivism offers a ‘thin’ lens to explore international relations. It centres on the possibility to develop and produce inter-subjective meanings occurring through the interaction process between states. It does not include alternative sources of identity formation beyond inter-state interaction. The focus is on states’ behaviours and identities that existed prior to internal and external factors. Therefore, the Wendtian approach is state-centric and takes a state’s identity as given.

By rejecting the a priori nature of identity, Zehfuss adds that the research focus should be on how states’ identity is constructed.³⁶ In this respect, the problem with conventional constructivism is that it imbues state actors with a number of assumed attributes such as institutional legal order, monopoly on the legitimate use of organised violence, sovereignty, society and territory.

In conventional constructivism, identities and interests are not only created in interaction, they are also sustained and articulated. Actors create and maintain the social structure, which subsequently constrains choices. However, once the structure of identity and interests has been established, they are resilient to transformation, because the social system becomes an objective social fact to the actors. Wendt captures this effect in the notion of the self-fulfilling prophecy according to which culture tends to reproduce itself. Actors may have an interest in maintaining stable identities (such as incentives established by institutions)³⁷ and interests originating during interaction among them.³⁸ If this holds true, then identity transformation is possible only in first encounters with other states/identities.

³⁴ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p.21, quoted by Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, p.41

³⁵ Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, p.46

³⁶ Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, p.41

³⁷ Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, p.40

³⁸ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p. 331, quoted by *Constructivism in International Relations*, p.43

For Wendt, actors have a corporate identity ‘constituted by the self-organising, homeostatic structure that makes actors distinct entities’.³⁹ In the case of state actors, this aspect of identity is based on domestic politics, which Wendt considers ‘ontologically prior to the state system, exogenously given’.⁴⁰ As Zehfuss put it, as part of a corporate identity, states relate with each other holding a certain a priori notion about ‘who they are, even beyond their awareness of their individuality and their ability to act’.⁴¹

The change in this a priori idea is correlated to change in state behaviours. Ultimately this is, for Wendt, an identity change. However, such a parallelism makes it difficult to distinguish ‘identity’ and ‘behaviour’.⁴² Wendt replies that identity refers to stable expectations regarding a specific behaviour.⁴³ However, this does not tell us when a change in behaviour is to be considered as a fundamental identity change. Given that the possibility of identity transformation may determine a significant move from one kind of anarchy to another, Wendt’s idea of stable expectations seems to be weak and it is an aspect that ultimately ties conventional constructivism to rationalism. Again, the problem is that, to detect an identity change it is necessary to recognize the identity beyond a mere state-centric interaction. The Wendtian Ego presents Alter with a new identity, which the latter will either approve or reject. Contestation over identity occurs only between Alter and Ego. How either of the actors or the ideas about Self and Other get constituted in the first place is not part of the account.⁴⁴ Excluding the process of the construction of the state as a bearer of identity and excluding domestic processes as factors that articulate state identity is part of the problem of conventional constructivism. This reduces identity to something negotiable between states.

Negotiation takes place around the question of who is considered part of Self. In other words, if other states identify themselves as part of Self, the result is that there is a collective rather than egoistic identity.⁴⁵ Wendt adds ‘identification is a continuum from negative to positive – from conceiving the other as anathema to Self to conceiving

³⁹ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, pp. 224-225, quoted by Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, p.44

⁴⁰ Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, p. 42

⁴¹ Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, p. 44

⁴² Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, p.62

⁴³ Zehfuss, *Ibidem*

⁴⁴ Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, p. 63

⁴⁵ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p. 229, quoted by Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, p.89

it as an extension of the self'.⁴⁶ However, as Todorov contends, the assessment of Other is only one of the many possibilities along which Self/Other relations can be analysed. The risk of the unique negative/positive continuum is to reduce the definition of Otherness to a measurement of Self's assimilation or submission of Other.⁴⁷ As will be noted, Todorov's intuition underlies the concept of 'degree of Otherness', that refers to a continuum including intermediate Self/Other representations existing between 'commonness' and radical 'difference'.

Neumann rejects Wendt's claim about the global convergence of Self's values that triggers a collective identity formation. Such a process assumes the existence of the 'us/them' dichotomy.⁴⁸ For Neumann, the process of 'othering' does not reflect an 'objective' cultural difference (that cannot be claimed). Difference is rather the result of the way in which symbols are activated. In addition, any difference has political significance and reflects a distinctive characteristic of identity. In this light, the delineation of Self from Other is an active and incessant aspect of identity formation that produces meaning rather than being the result of a global integration force. The focus for analysis of identity formation should thus be on how these boundaries are generated through 'othering' and how they are sustained.⁴⁹

In addition, Self's collective identity is not only maintained towards Other. In fact, it is important to consider that Self is committed to sustain its collective identities towards other forms of political organization – internal society, international organisation etc. Therefore, the notion of collective identity involves a number of dimensions – including the internal one – and needs to be analysed as many-sided.⁵⁰

For Wæver, the Wendtian concept of collective identity may lead one to believe that, in order to cooperate, actors simply need to agree and define concepts identically (e.g. *acquis communautaire*). However, cases where the condition is the opposite also exist: states, for example, pursue similar policies but the story/narrative sustaining this policy might be justified differently from one state to another.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Wendt, *Collective Identity Formation and the International State*, p.386

⁴⁷ T., Todorov, *The Conquest of America: the Question of the Other*, New York: Harper Perennial, 1992, quoted by I.,B. Neumann, *Uses of the Other. The East in European Identity Formation*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999, p. 34

⁴⁸ Wendt, *Constructing International Politics*, p.75

⁴⁹ Neumann, *Uses of the Other. "The East" in European Identity Formation*, pp.34-35

⁵⁰ Neumann, *Uses of the Other. "The East" in European Identity Formation*, p.36

⁵¹ O., Wæver, *Identity, Communities and Foreign Policy: Discourse Analysis as Foreign Policy Theory*, in O., Wæver, and L., Hensen, eds., *European Integration and National Identity*, London-New York: Routledge, 2002, p.40

Drawing from this last element, it emerges that Wendtian constructivism fails to analyse the domestic and discursive dimensions of interaction. Even if Wendt acknowledges the importance of rhetorical practice or verbal communication, in reality he holds that only behaviour is construed as the key to identity change. In the Wendtian relationship between Ego and Alter (Self/Other), interaction between the two parties is a symbolic interactionism developed on the basis of physical gesture. Wendtian actors do not interact discursively. They only send signals to each other. While it is true that a social act consists of an exchange of signals, and the answer to it is based on reflection and interpretation, the problem is that, in order to be capable of reflecting and interpreting, actors need to share a language. Wendt, and conventional constructivism in general, fails to accurately examine the role of language in interaction.⁵² As Zehfuss put it, in the Wendtian approach, communication resembles the exchange of moves in game theory. An interpretation of a situation consists of an exchange of moves where Ego interprets Alter's signs and responds to them on the basis of Ego's experience. As Mercer points out, interpretation is 'nothing but supposition, analogy or projection'.⁵³ In other words, Alter's perspective is overlooked. Ego's interpretation is unrelated to the meanings that Alter may attribute to its gesture. The analysis of Alter/Other's interpretations is however possible through focusing on language.

Wendt's Social Theory of International Politics barely refers to the relevance of language and discourse.⁵⁴ Physical behaviour remains at the centre of his approach (symbolic interactionism). As it is, the Wendtian approach focuses on behaviours that can be grasped without analysing language.

The linguistic dimension of interaction represents the main divide between critical constructivism/post-structuralism and conventional/mainstream constructivism. The former does incorporate symbolic interactionism and it places it on the same level as spoken discourse. In short, discourses are not only about language but also about action and practices. Actions in fact, are no less a form of communication than speech.

By drawing on the discursive contestation over the German identity, Zehfuss demonstrates that Wendt's overlooking of domestic politics and the disregard towards

⁵² Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, pp. 48-49

⁵³ Mercer, *Anarchy and Identity*, p. 248

⁵⁴ Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, p. 49

the discursive production of identity is not a methodological choice but is intrinsic in the conventional constructivist account.⁵⁵

In this light, Wendt's version of constructivism seems to be a sort of scientific realism. It is still grounded in rationalism since it believes that causal mechanisms do exist.⁵⁶ In general, the increasing focus of conventional constructivists – not necessary Wendtian – to study identity through the positivist methodology of validation and falsification share the same criticism. These accounts seek to determine 'when' identity matters by investigating whether a specific action was caused by identity, or by material interests (security/economics). Making such a distinction is problematic in the first place since all identities and actions are subject to construction.

Overall, the reason why the Wendtian approach is still tied to rationalism lies in the symmetric attribution of a specific identity to a specific state. Such assumptions also confirm that his approach remains state-centric: a specific identity is attributed to a specific state-actor. States' identity is fixed and a theorisation of identity is limited to the process of interaction with other states-actors. Specifically, Wendt's concept of the state as a unitary actor cannot cope with an understanding of identity as relatively unstable. As critical constructivism/ post-structuralism holds, identity should be studied as a fluid concept constituted in discourses and they are not logically-bounded entities. Identities are continuously (re)articulated and contested. This makes them hard to be detected as explanatory categories. It follows that the stories we tell about ourselves are not necessarily coherent. Wendt's view of identity as attached to and negotiated between pre-existing anthropomorphic actors characterise identity as a unitary, and circumscribable concept.

From this perspective, the next section analyses the limits of the understanding of identity as elaborated by conventional constructivism and introduces the critical constructivist/post-structuralist approach.

3 Critical Constructivism/Post-structuralism: Towards a Discursive Approach

⁵⁵ Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, p. 62

⁵⁶ Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations*, pp.91-92

This section examines the debate occurring within the constructivist tradition on the understanding of identity. This will pave the ground to explore how the critical constructivist/post-structuralist approach addresses the problems related to identity that conventional constructivism has left unsolved. In addition, as noted, critical constructivism draws from post-structuralism in that it conceives world order as constituted by a discursive structure rather than a material and deterministic one. Given the emphasis on the discursive dimension, the section will explore the post-structuralist discursive approach and its implications on the study of foreign policy. The reference to foreign policy is essential as it represents the remit in which the EU and Russia frame their relations.

As noted, Wendt overlaps the concept of ‘identity’ with that of ‘state’ and ‘sovereignty’. However, the Wendtian theory offers little to understand meaning originating from within the state – how each state establishes its own meaning, its identity and foreign policy⁵⁷. As argued by Ringmar, Wendt’s theory of identity formation is:

‘Fundamentally one sided: the problem of identity formation is constantly seen from the perspective of the system and never as a problem each state and each statesman has to grapple with. He can tell us why a certain identity is recognised, but not what that identity is... What Wendt needs, but cannot provide with his theoretical perspective, is an account of how states interpret the structures of international politics and how they use them in interaction with others.’⁵⁸

Although Wendt contends that the world is constructed, there are certain aspects of the world which he takes as given. As Doty puts it, Wendt ‘seems to suggest that one should go with social construction when it is convenient and reify when it is not’.⁵⁹ What is particularly significant is that it is precisely with respect to the key move of identity transformation that Wendt is not consistent with the constructivist principle that

⁵⁷ Wæver, in Hansen and Wæver, *European Integration and National Identity*, p. 21

⁵⁸ E., Ringmar, Alexander Wendt: A Social Scientist Struggling with History, in I.B., Neumann, and O., Wæver, eds., *The Future of International Relations: Masters in the Making?*, London: Routledge, 1997, p. 283, quoted by Wæver, in Hansen and Wæver, *European Integration and National Identity*, pp. 21-22

⁵⁹ R., Doty, Desire All the Way Down, *Review of International Studies*, Vol.26, 2000, pp. 137-139

‘reality’ is constructed rather than given. According to Wæver, a Wendtian constructivism holds well only until change occurs, but it is unable to explain why the same identity can promote contradictory foreign policies. Identity is a much more unstructured and unstable concept. In order to move towards self-producing identities (addressing the problem of the Wendtian perspective), the approach needs to become more critical and post-structuralist.⁶⁰

As explained, through the notions of collective identity and symbolic interactionism, conventional constructivism depicts identity formation as a process of socialisation through which Other perceives Self in the way that Self does. Hence, Other lacks constitutive power. Other simply represents other states rather than alternative and different identities.⁶¹

In particular, conventional constructivism has argued that there is a social structure to international politics, constituted by norms, institutions, ideas and collective meanings that represent the benchmark to derive subject positions. In other words, the self-identification of a state and its recognition of others is derived from its position vis a vis the dominant (mainly Western) social structure of international politics.⁶² The Self/Other relationship is limited to a symbolic recognition of Self towards Other rather than in terms of mutual identity formation.⁶³

Conversely, the constitution of identity and meaning in relation to ‘difference’ (Other) forms the basis of critical constructivism/post-structuralism. The solution proposed by this approach to overcome the Wendtian fixed conception of identity is to study the construction of identity as a process of linking to and differentiation from an Other identity.⁶⁴ For example, as Rumelili describes, to be considered as significant identity categories such as democracy and human rights have to link to and differentiate from the existence of their ‘logical opposite’ that is, non-democracy. Thus, positive discourses on the promotion of democracy and human rights unavoidably produce two identity categories: a moral (human rights) and superior identity (democracy), that is

⁶⁰ Wæver, in Hansen and Wæver, *European Integration and National Identity*, pp.22-24

⁶¹ B., Rumelili, *Constructing Identity and Relating to Difference: Understanding EU’s Mode of Differentiation*, *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 30, No.1, 2004, pp. 27-47

⁶² Rumelili, *Constructing Identity and Relating to Difference: Understanding EU’s Mode of Differentiation*, pp., 30-31

⁶³ Rumelili, *Constructing Identity and Relating to Difference: Understanding EU’s Mode of Differentiation*, p.32

⁶⁴ Rumelili, *Constructing Identity and Relating to Difference: Understanding EU’s Mode of Differentiation*, p.31

opposed to an inferior Other (dictatorship).⁶⁵

Conventional constructivism downplays the role of 'difference' (or Otherness) in identity formation through various counter-arguments. One regards the possibility to discern between pre-social (corporate) and social identities of states, and that corporate identity is 'constituted by self-organising homeostatic structure' and as such is 'constitutionally exogenous to Otherness'.⁶⁶ Wendt argues that 'if a process is self-organising, then there is no particular Other to which the self is related'.⁶⁷ In addition, there is the criticism that the concept of corporate identity establishes states as 'unequivocally bounded actors' and that this 'brackets the struggle among many possible and rivalling selves'.⁶⁸ Wendt replies by arguing that 'the self-organisation hypothesis does not deny the ongoing process of boundary-drawing' but it simply underlines the existence of an internally driven process that does not involve 'the agency and discourse of outsiders'.⁶⁹

For Rumelili, here Wendt conflates two different processes. The constitution of identity in relation to difference does not mean that the constitution of identity necessarily involves an interaction process with outsiders. What is necessary is the mere existence of Other, that is alternative identities. It follows that no process can be self-organising because it implies a constant boundary-drawing process between a Self and an Other and it does not necessarily require Other's active engagement in such a process.⁷⁰

Another way in which conventional constructivism downplays the role of difference in identity construction is by arguing that some state identities are 'type' identities (e.g. democracy) that need only minimal interaction with Others, and that embed characteristics 'intrinsic to the actors'. It emerges that a state can derive its democratic nature by itself. Only so called 'role' identities such as enemy, friend or rival are relational and necessitate the existence of other states. While democracy reflects a state's internal arrangement and all states may become democratic if they incorporate

⁶⁵ Rumelili, *ibidem*

⁶⁶ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, pp.224-225, quoted by Rumelili, *Constructing Identity and Relating to Difference: Understanding EU's Mode of Differentiation*, p.31

⁶⁷ Wendt, (1999), *Social Theory of International Politics*, p.225, quoted by Rumelili, *Constructing Identity and Relating to Difference: Understanding EU's Mode of Differentiation*, p.31

⁶⁸ I, B. Neumann, Self and Other in International Relations, *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol.2, No.2, 1996, p.165

⁶⁹ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p.74

⁷⁰ Rumelili, *Constructing Identity and Relating to Difference: Understanding EU's Mode of Differentiation*, p.32

democratic rules, democracy – as a category of identity – is still constituted in relation to difference in two respects. Firstly, its existence as an identity presupposes the conceptual existence of non-democracy. Secondly, the element that allows one to distinguish between a true democratic Self and a semi or non-democratic Other is the discursive ‘performance’ of the former that outlines the ‘false’ nature of the Other.⁷¹ Hence, the concept of drawing the boundary through discourses is central for distinguishing ‘false’ identities from ‘true’ ones.

Conventional constructivism ultimately relies on the notion of collective identity among states as a justification for neglecting the notion of difference in identity construction. What Wendt fails to consider is that the construction of difference remains integral to the production of the collective identity. As Neumann put it, ‘collective identity is a relation between two human collectives and it always lies in the relation between the collective self and its others’.⁷² For a critical constructivist / post-structuralist approach, the identity presupposes a constitution of Self in relation to an Other. Even in the case in which collective identity expands to embrace Other, such an expansion will reproduce the logic of identity in a broader collectivity which relies on the difference with Other.

To sum up, the constructivist IR literature is divided over the importance of ‘difference’ in identity formation. Critical constructivism / post-structuralism infers ‘difference’ from the discursive contest between Self and Other. In doing so, it emphasises the constitutive role of Other’s discourse in the identity formation of Self. In contrast, conventional constructivism minimises the role of ‘difference’ in identity formation through various counterarguments, which, ultimately, jeopardise its original principle concerning the socially constructed nature of identities and ‘reality’. These debates within the constructivist tradition have created a divide between conventional (‘thin’) and critical (‘thick’) constructivists.⁷³ The latter group draws extensively on post-structuralist principles concerning the study of international politics, in particular their emphasis on discursive clashes between political projects as a way to define competing selves.

⁷¹ Rumelilli, *Ibidem*

⁷² B., I. Neumann European Identity, EU Expansion, and the Integration/ Exclusion Nexus, *Alternatives*, Vol. 23, 1998, pp. 397-416

⁷³ L. Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, London-New York: Routledge, 2006, pp. 3-4

For ‘thick’ constructivists see Katzenstein, 1996; Adler, 1997; Prince and Reus Smith, 1998; Zehfuss, 2001, quoted by Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, p.3

This section turns its focus more specifically to the alternative critical constructivist / post-structuralist approach that proposes solutions to the limits of conventional constructivism, especially on the issue of identity formation. Critical constructivism / post-structuralism understands identity in a more elaborate and systematic way compared to conventional constructivism.

Post-structuralism does not mean anti-structuralism, but a philosophical stance that emerges from structuralism.⁷⁴ In an attempt to distinguish conventional constructivism from post-structuralism, Adler warns that the latter ‘concedes too much to ideas’ and that there is a non-socially (material) constructed reality as well as a socially constructed one.⁷⁵ On the other side, Laclau and Mouffe contend that post-structuralism aims to avoid the idealism / materialism dichotomy as a way to explain the world: post-structuralism affirms the material character of every discursive structure.⁷⁶ With reference to identity, post-structuralism is an approach that contests and deconstructs the conventional identity of the subject. It tends to both disaggregate and dislocates the identity conventionally attributed to Self. This does not mean that the subject is eliminated but that it is systematically distributed. The subject resides in different and undefined structures with no common rule.⁷⁷ It is in a nomadic existence and driven by a constant tendency to be established in finite structure. The subject becomes manifest through the way it fills the structures and the ‘empty spaces’ it relates to. Subjectivity is loosely connected through structures.⁷⁸ When a new events occurs, the subject can react by questioning shared intersubjective norms and values rejecting, as a consequence, the assumption of absolute truth. This is not to deny the existence of norms and values or truth. It is to deny their determinant character in favour of their discursive nature. Bringing this reasoning to the study of politics, it follows that determinism is not the basis on which political action should be studied.⁷⁹ According to Ringmar, the stories / narratives we tell each other about ourselves are only one possible story among many, and as such, none enjoys a privileged status. Similarly, social scientists should discard

⁷⁴ Wæver, in Hensen and Wæver, *European Integration and National Identity*, p.32

⁷⁵ Adler, *Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics*, p.340

⁷⁶ E., Laclau, and C., Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, London:Verso, 1985, p.108

⁷⁷ J., Williams, *Understanding Post-structuralism*, Acumen Publishing Limited, Chesham, 2005, pp.68-69

⁷⁸ Williams, *Understanding Post-structuralism*, pp. 68-70

⁷⁹ Williams, *Understanding Post-structuralism*, pp. 69-70

assumptions about the existence of a unified, coherent and transcendental Self. Hence, there is no underlying ‘essence’ which accounts for unity and which makes it possible for us to rank our preferences consistently over time and between narrative contexts. From this perspective, it is conceivable that people and states act inconsistently and that their self-identification, their interests and their actions vary on the basis of the audience (Other) they address.⁸⁰ Self’s identity relates with its audience through, and on the basis of, narratives and discourses.

Having clarified the relation between identity and discourse, it is now important to position the category of ‘interest’. Policymakers cannot present interests outside of a broader narrative structure. An interest-based argument is always made on the basis of a particular distribution of layered identities. In other words, the relation between interests and identity is not fixed per se but it holds as long as identity and interest are framed in a specific discourse. Within two different discourses it is possible to find the same identity connected to different interests and vice-versa. For example, Russian Westernizers view Russia’s identity as belonging to Europe and therefore argued that Russia should follow the Western course of development (pro-Western narrative). Thus, Russia’s interests should be consistent with the Western model. Conversely, Russian Slavophiles describe the same Russian identity as belonging to a unique (non-European) course of development (exceptionalist narrative).

Similarly, Ringmar contends that neither actions nor interests can exist outside of a discursive context. Moreover, since these discourses vary by unfolding in different rhetorical backgrounds, the way in which we define our interests will vary correspondingly. As a consequence, interests can never refer to something that we ‘really’ or ‘objectively’ want but only to what we may want ourselves to want before a specific audience.⁸¹

As Ringmar put it, “a good story ‘activates’ the interests that we have and makes them ‘come alive’.”⁸² Subject, object and concepts cannot be conceived as existing independent of discourses. Specific arguments and representations that are meaningful in one period, and spoken before a particular audience in one place, can be meaningless if place, period and audience vary.

⁸⁰ E., Ringmar, *Identity, Interests and Action*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 88-89

⁸¹ Ringmar, *Identity, Interests and Action*, pp. 87-88

⁸² Ringmar, *Identity, Interests and Action*, p. 74

In other words, an explanation phrased in terms of conflicting / converging interests alone is not sufficient. Instead, the relation between discourse / identity / interests is triangular. The description of our actions is always linked to the description of our identity. The resulting interests are a consequence of our self-identification which, in turn, tend to reflect the descriptions under which we can gain recognition.⁸³ In this way, the applicability of the interest-driven explanation will always stem from the stability of Self to whom these interests are claimed to belong. An explanation of events based only on the description of actors' interests holds only in the framework of a specific discourse. In fact, when a new identity is in the process of being established ('formative moment'), meanings are contested and new discourses (with their various implied interests) are advanced.⁸⁴ Overall, the contestation is over identities rather than interests and it has a discursive rather than material character.⁸⁵

This relationship between discourses, identities and interests is crucial also with reference to foreign policy and it has important implications. Referring to foreign policy is important as it represents the ground on which international politics is played. The relationship between identity and foreign policy is at the centre of post-structuralism's research agenda: foreign policy in fact relies upon representations of identity, but it is also through the formulation of foreign policy that identities are (re)produced and their related interests advanced.⁸⁶ Campbell, for example, concentrates on demonstrating how foreign policy is not simply the response and action of a pre-given subject, but it reflects how subjectivity is reproduced.⁸⁷ Post-structuralism argues that foreign policy discourses offer a basis to analyse how material factors and ideas are intertwined to such an extent that the two cannot be separated. Furthermore, foreign policy discourses have an essential social basis because policymakers advance their discourse to address political opposition in the attempt to institutionalise their understanding of the identity and policy options. This also confirms that identity emerges through discursive practices. Unlike rationalism and conventional constructivism – which assume ideas to

⁸³ Ringmar, *Identity, Interests and Action*, p.90

⁸⁴ Ringmar, *Identity, Interests and Action*, pp.83-84

⁸⁵ Ringmar, *Identity, Interests and Action*, p.90

⁸⁶ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, p.1

⁸⁷ D. Campbell, *Writing Security. United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992

be a variable of foreign policy analysis⁸⁸ – for post-structuralism, ideas alone are not variables and they cannot generate any objective causality relationship.⁸⁹ Consequently, it is impossible to conceive of identity as a variable that is causally separated from foreign policy, or to measure its explanatory value in competition with non-discursive material factors. The conceptualisation of identity as constructed through discursive interaction and as generative of policies (and interests) rejects the claim that there are objective identities located in the extra-discursive sphere. Thus, identity per se cannot represent a variable against which behaviour and non-discursive factors can be derived. This explains why causality, in a Humean sense, is impossible when speaking about identity. This also entails a conceptualisation of identity as a category existing only as long as it is continuously re-articulated and contested by competing discourse.⁹⁰ A discourse can articulate a subject's identity and generate related interests, but another discourse can articulate the identity of the same subject along different lines and this generates different interests. There is no 'extra-discursive' materiality that presents itself independently of its discursive representation. This is not to say that materiality is meaningless, but rather that it is always discursively mediated and accessed.⁹¹ In short, the search for 'objective' truth cannot rely on causal epistemology. Rather truth is located in historically-situated discourse, not in an extra-discursive, extra-historical universal objectivity. In addition, the post-structuralist choice of employing a non-causal relationship does not imply that analysis should be conducted without any epistemological or methodological principles. Conversely, the focus on exploring discourse (discursive epistemology) implies that causality is to be sought within the discursive framework.

To sum up, this thesis understands critical constructivism as a strand of IR constructivism that embraces the post-structuralist linguistic turn. As such, drawing on post-structuralist discourse analysis, critical constructivism focuses on power relations as they emerge from the communicative pattern among actors. Although the

⁸⁸ See for example M., Laffey, and J., Weldes, Beyond Belief. Ideas and Symbolic Technologies in the Study of International Relations, *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol.3, No.2, pp.193-238 quoted by Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, p.1

See also J., Goldstein, R.O., Keohane, eds., *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993, quoted by Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, p.1

⁸⁹ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, pp. 1-2

⁹⁰ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, p.6

⁹¹ Wæver, in Hansen and Wæver, *European Integration and National Identity*, p. 25

methodology of a post-structuralist discourse-analysis will be largely discussed in Chapter 2, the next section will briefly introduce its basic principles.

3.1 Discourse, Language and ‘Degree of Otherness’

As Ole Wæver noted, post-structuralism extensively relies on political discourses. Discourse analysis focuses on public texts and does not attempt to extrapolate the thoughts of the actors or their secret objectives or intentions. In particular, in the sphere of foreign policy where a lot is unknown, a discourse approach represents a methodological asset.⁹² The focus of a discourse approach is not on what decision-makers truly think but which narrative references each actor uses during interaction with others. In doing so, the logic of arguments remains much more clear-cut if the analyst sticks rigorously to the discourses created. Discourse, in fact, constitutes a sphere with its own logic, coherence and meaningful tensions.⁹³

The discursive analyst creates the coherence and tension of discourses by inferring common themes from reading political texts, speeches and symbolic actions. What contributes to the unity and coherence of a discourse are the regularities showed by the relations between different statements. The resulting political discourse contains justification for specific policies and draws the margins with competing discourses and policies. There is no space in this approach for individual cognitions – that is what people really think about specific policies (for example through interviews). This in fact, would introduce a subjective criterion for judging all texts. Discourse analysis has overcome this obstacle, finding in the use of language the solution. The assumption here is that if actors share the same language, then the analyst can rely on a tangible tool to understand their relations and logics.

The use of language as a system per se allows studying it as a separate stratum of reality. The advantage of language compared to other tools/sites of investigation is that it is possible to focus on it. In other words, language is ontologically relevant: it is only through their construction in language that Self, Other, states, and material structures acquire meaning and identity. To understand language as a social tool implies

⁹² Wæver, in Hansen and Wæver, *European Integration and National Identity*, p.26

⁹³ Wæver, *Ibidem*

considering it not as a private property belonging to individuals but as a range of collective conventions that each entity uses to make sense of the social reality, which, as noted, is made of different and opposed concepts. From this perspective, by expressing this ‘difference’ in the form of Self’s exclusion of Other and vice-versa, language has meaning.⁹⁴ As such, post-structuralism approaches language as a system of meaning that sheds light on external realities. As noted, it is worth reiterating that not only language per se (such as politicians’ statements, official documents) but also actors’ symbolic actions (even silence) can be considered as being a communicative act. Wendtian symbolic interactionism only emphasises behaviour as the key to grasp identity change while rationalism overlooked it altogether. The ultimate difference between critical constructivism / post-structuralism and mainstream IR theories (conventional constructivism and rationalism) lies in the understanding of language.

Conversely, the advantage of studying foreign policy through discourses and language is that it opens up a theoretical and empirical research agenda aiming to examine discursive contestation among opposed political forces.⁹⁵ As noted, post-structuralism conceptualises identity as relational and social while the constitution of identity occurs through linking with and differentiating from ‘Other’ in a process of mutual constitution. This puts great emphasis on the constitutive role of the outsider to explain the formation of Self-identity and vice-versa. Heller for example, focuses on the importance of competing narratives in Russia’s debate between Slavophiles, Westernisers, Pan-Slavists and Nihilists for the conceptualisation of the ‘West’. The attempt of Russians to define an identity distinct from the West contributed, in turn, to the formation of a distinctive identity for the ‘West’ which then came to be perceived as ‘Other’.⁹⁶

In foreign policy, security discourses are particularly important as they have traditionally fostered the construction of a Self who faces a threatening Other with a different identity from that of Self. In this respect, Campbell explicitly examines security as a primary source through which Self and Other are constituted. In ‘Writing

⁹⁴ Wæver, in Hansen and Wæver, *European Integration and National Identity*, p.28

⁹⁵ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, p 7

⁹⁶ P., Heller, *The Russian Dawn: How Russia Contributed to the Emergence of ‘The West’ as a Concept*, in C. S., Browning, and M., Lethi, eds., *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, Oxon: Routledge, 2010, pp. 33-52

Security', Campbell argues that in order to maintain and preserve security, nation states need to engage in the continual reproduction of boundary-producing practices and to continually perform their identities. This refers to a particular mode of subjectivity based on a relationship with Other which is constantly characterized as confrontational and possibly violent.⁹⁷ However, although it is undoubtedly true that Self's and Other's identities are often engaged in a contrasting game, it cannot be inferred – from a post-structuralist starting point – that antagonism is the only main source of meaning.⁹⁸ In this respect, Laffey argues that, despite his commitment to the view that the production and reproduction of identity is an unstable and unfinished issue, Campbell fails to account for changes in the reproduction of the US identity, which remains consistent over a long period of time. In his critique, Laffey contends that Campbell fails to locate subject formation in the multiple logics that constitute the social and that thus influence the reproduction and transformations of subjectivity. As such, the social is not constituted through antagonism only, but it involves multiple logics.⁹⁹ This means, for example, that discursive linking and differentiation to a threatening Other is only one possibility. The ultimate factor that accounts for the construction of identity is the 'degree of Otherness' that measures how alien Other is, ranging from a fundamental difference between Self and Other to constructions of less than radical difference. In other words, Other is not necessarily constituted in radicalised terms or as the 'rival' to oppose but it can also be depicted as a 'partner'.

This goes beyond a simple Self/Other dichotomy and sheds light on how Other is located within the web of multiple identities.¹⁰⁰ As such, the 'degree of otherness' should be imagined as a continuum that has at its extremes radical confrontation on one side, and partnership and cooperation, on the other side. However, a number of intermediate possibilities and representations¹⁰¹ – such as partner, learner, and threat – lie between these extremes. Therefore, as the diagram below shows, the qualitative value of Otherness can vary.¹⁰²

⁹⁷ M., Laffey, *Locating Identity: Performative, Foreign Policy and State Action*, *Review of International Studies*, Vol., 26, Issue 3, 2000, pp. 434-435

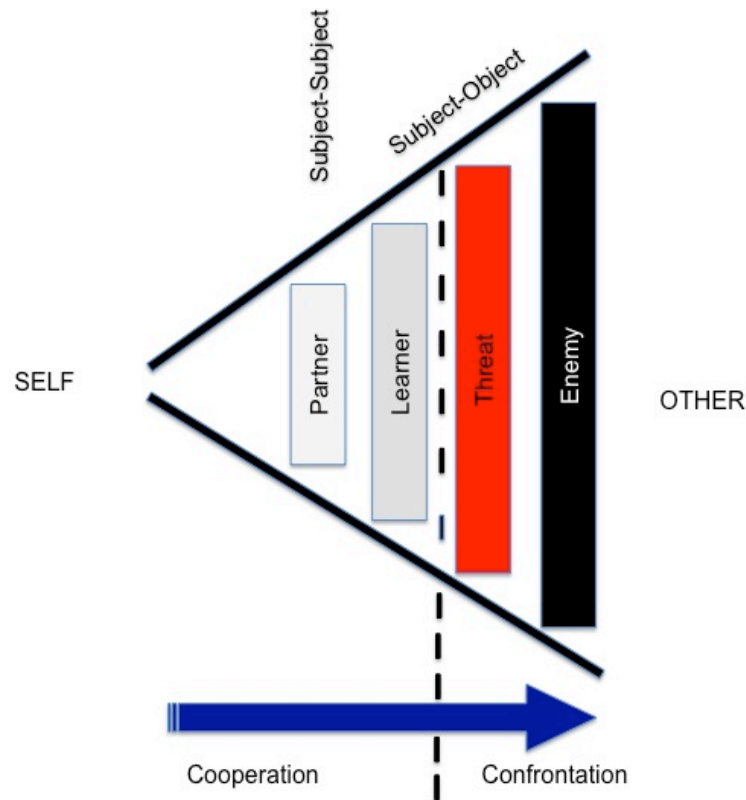
⁹⁸ Wæver, in Hansen and Wæver, *European Integration and National Identity*, p.24

⁹⁹ Laffey, *Locating Identity: Performative, Foreign Policy and State Action*, pp.433-434

¹⁰⁰ Wæver, in Hansen and Wæver, *European Integration and National Identity*, pp. 40-41

¹⁰¹ See for example C.S Browning, and G., Christou, *The Constitutive Power of Outsiders: The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Dimension*, *Political Geography*, Vol. 29, 2010, p.110

¹⁰² Original figure designed by the author.



In addition, for Hansen, in the construction of identity and difference in foreign policy discourse, spatial, temporal and ethical identities are intertwined dimensions that help to define the ‘degree of Otherness’. Spatiality, temporality, and ethicality are analytical lenses that illustrate the political substance of identity construction and implicit signs.¹⁰³ In short, Self’s identity is not necessarily constructed through a discursive opposition to a different threatening Other; but spatiality, temporality and ethicality can help measure what kind of entity Other is (‘degrees of Otherness’).¹⁰⁴ This reinforces the view that there is not a sole aspect of Otherness but multiple combination.

4 Relevant Literature on EU-Russia Relations

The aim of this section is to provide a review of the main accounts on EU-Russia relations proposed by mainstream IR theories: (neo)realism, (neo)liberalism, and conventional constructivism. The discussion focuses on the strengths, weaknesses, and

¹⁰³ Wæver, in Hansen and Wæver, *European Integration and National Identity*, p.47

¹⁰⁴ Wæver, in Hansen and Wæver, *European Integration and National Identity*, p.37

limitations in these accounts and helps us understand how critical constructivism / post-structuralism instead explains the relations. Such a discussion prepares the ground to illustrate how this research project fits in and the contribution which it seeks to make.

Generally speaking, the main objective of the existing literature on EU-Russia relations has been to understand the normative rivalry deriving from the Western expansion towards Russia and the latter's resistance to it.

With reference to the realist tradition, as noted, anarchy in international politics is the element that determines the self-interested nature of states. Classical realism holds that national security requires uneven distribution of power in one's favour. Meanwhile hegemonic stability theorists – such as Gilpin, Keohane and Krasner – suggest hegemony, not balance, is preferable at a systemic level. From this perspective, realist studies tend to describe the tension in EU-Russian relations through the conflict of economic and political interests that undermine actors' security.¹⁰⁵ Russia, it is argued, perceives enlargement as a Western attempt to undermine Russian security and the balance of power. Drawing from this zero-sum game, realist studies have explained the 2004 EU enlargement, the launch of the EU's European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), Russia's ambitions in the post-Soviet Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) expansion in the European continent as attempts to marginalise Russia at the expense of extending Western European influence.¹⁰⁶ Other analysts have outlined how the conflict of interests and threats to security mainly derive from the asymmetric energy interdependency of the actors.¹⁰⁷ The neorealist approach has focused more on the structure of international politics as the factor that determines actors' actions. As such, the Russian aim to achieve a regional hegemonic position in Europe is driven by the intention to challenge the unipolar power of the US. This, it is argued, would enable Russia to re-establish the balance of power in

¹⁰⁵ J., Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy: The Return of Great Power Politics*, Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009

¹⁰⁶ G., Timmins, Strategic or Pragmatic Partnership? The European Union's Policy Towards Russia since the End of the Cold War, *European Security*, Vol.11, No. 4, 2002, pp. 78-95

See also J., Gower, and G., Timmins, *Russia and Europe in the Twenty-First Century: An Uneasy Partnership*, London-New York: Anthem Press, 2007

See also T., Gomart, *EU-Russia Relations, Towards a Way Out of Depression*, CSIS, July 2008

¹⁰⁷ J., Hughes, *EU Relations with Russia: Partnership of Asymmetric Interdependency?*, LSE Research Online, 2006. Available from: <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/651/1/Hughes.EU-Russia.2006.pdf> Accessed 20/01/2013

See also M., Leonard, and N., Popescu, *A Power Audit of Russia-EU Relations*, London, ECFR, 2007. Available from: http://ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR-02_A_POWER_AUDIT_OF_EU-RUSSIA_RELATIONS.pdf Accessed 20/01/2014

the structure of international politics.¹⁰⁸ By rejecting the neorealist overemphasis on the structural element, neoclassical realists have sought to complement the analysis by considering internal factors as a further determinant of states' action in foreign policy. From this standpoint, Russia's aggressive foreign policy and resistance to Western expansion stem from a choice of domestic policy that promotes a neo-revisionist foreign policy. External factors such as (im)balance of power in international politics and the ideological conflict with the West are less important issues.¹⁰⁹ With reference to the last point, it emerges that the constitutive power of outsiders in determining the conflict with the West is also overlooked. Rather, the tension derives from a specific foreign policy direction which emerged in Russia's internal politics.

From this perspective, neoliberal readings believe that Russia's move from the democratic (Western) model towards an authoritarian regime is linked to the re-emergence of an aggressive foreign policy in Russia that tends to regard the relationship with the West (EU and US) in confrontational terms. Ambrosio¹¹⁰ takes Russia as an example of a semi-democratic state – emerging as a Great Power – that poses a challenge to the leading strategy of the West (e.g. democracy promotion) by supporting authoritarianism.

Another liberal or 'transitionalist' strand elaborated by Prozorov, focuses on the degree of interdependence between the EU and Russia and argues that the sluggish progress of liberal (read Western) reforms in Russia is at the core of the political and normative conflict between Russia and the EU.¹¹¹ From a Western perspective, Russia is essentially seen as the bad learner incapable to absorb the Western political and economic models and, thus unable to accomplish a real transition.

In his critique of the liberal account, Prozorov contends that the exogenous incongruity of EU and Russian identity becomes 'a matter of conceptual premise rather than an

¹⁰⁸ K.N., Waltz, Structural Realism After the Cold War, *International Security*, Vol. 25, No.1, 2000, pp. 5-41.

See J., Mearsheimer, *The tragedy of Great Power politics*

¹⁰⁹ R., Sakwa, New Cold War or Twenty Years' Crisis? Russia and International Politics, *International Affairs*, Vol.84, No. 2, 2008, pp.251-252

¹¹⁰ T., Ambrosio, *Authoritarian Backlash. Russian Resistance to Democratization in the Former Soviet Union*, Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009

¹¹¹ S., Prozorov, *Understanding Conflict between Russia and the EU*, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006, pp.1-20

See also D., Trenin, Identity and Integration: Russia and the West in the XXIst Century, *Pro et Contra*. Vol. 8, No. 3. 2004.

See also L. Shevtsova, What's the Matter with Russia?, *Journal of Democracy*., Vol.21, No.1, 2010, pp. 152-159

empirically derived conclusion'.¹¹² In short, the alleged difference between the actors' interests is given and not examined. Whereas the traditional literature explains tension by assuming Russia's essential difference and incapacity to embrace West's models, Prozorov argues that conflict lies at discourse level. For example, the integrationalist discourse – used by the EU to govern its relationship towards Russia – is a cause of conflict as it includes the idea of transferring the EU's normative ideal to Russia.¹¹³ Overall, rationalist approaches fail to include the impact of ideational and historical factors in their investigations. In addition, the tension between the EU and Russia neglects identity-related factors. Rather, actors' identities are assumed as incompatible and different.

Conventional constructivism attempts to address these gaps by conceptualising the relation as a Self/Other interaction in order to account for the normative tensions between Russia and the EU. Romaniuk for example, stresses that a norm-based tension in EU-Russian relations creates obstacles to further cooperation. These tensions are due to the different identity of actors – Russia as a self-interested modern state, and the EU as a post-modern entity.¹¹⁴

Other conventional constructivists hold the assumption that Russia's target is the EU's recognition. They provide an historical background and introduce an ideational element to explain the origin of such an assumption. For example, Splidsboel-Hansen analyzes how, following the collapse of the USSR, the emerging Russian Federation started to seek EU's recognition of its new identity after 1991.¹¹⁵ By looking back into history, authors such as Haukkala¹¹⁶ found that Western Europe's failure to recognise Russia as a legitimate power explains the tension between the actors and triggers practices of 'Othering' in Western Europe. Therefore, by posing recognition as lying at the core of the tension, these authors are able to frame the relation along binary dichotomies such as teacher/learner.

¹¹² Prozorov, *Understanding Conflict between Russia and the EU*, p.18

¹¹³ S., Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, Working Papers Series in EU Border Conflicts Studies, No. 13, 2005

¹¹⁴ S. N., Romaniuk, Rethinking EU-Russia relations: Modern Cooperation or Post-Modern Strategic Partnership?, *Central European Journal of International and Security Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 2009, p.71

¹¹⁵ F., Splidsboel-Hansen, Russia's Relations with the European Union: A Constructivist Cut, *International Politics*, Vol. 39, No.4, 2002, pp. 399-421

¹¹⁶ H., Haukkala, A Norm-Maker or a Norm-Taker? The Changing Normative Parameters of Russia's Place in Europe, in T., Hopf, *Russia's European Choice*, New York and Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008a.

However, the issue of recognition is mainly seen unilaterally: Western Europe, in fact, stands as the reference point by which Russian status and identity is measured. The perspective of the Russian Other and its impact on Western identity is neglected. The fact that recognition is measured only vis à vis Western Europe leads to the assumption that Russia and Western Europe have intrinsically different identities. To give an example, we might note Haukkala's analysis of EU-Russia relations in which he depicts a binary opposition between both parties in respect of their relationship to sovereignty. For Haukkala, the EU is a post-modern, post-sovereign organisation that pursues regionalisation and globalisation, while Russia understands sovereignty in a 'modern' fashion.¹¹⁷ In doing so, he assumes that actors hold a pre-existing understanding of sovereignty.

Overall, the strengths of the rationalist and conventional constructivist approaches are that they provide a comprehensive explanation to understand 'why' the tension between the EU/Western Europe and Russia occurs in practical terms. In particular, conventional constructivist renderings contribute by introducing the role of different identities. However, the very reason for the tension – the fact that these two actors have different normative foundations and thus, different foreign policy positions – is still an external factor taken for granted. In other words, the 'how' question is neglected. In particular, the discursive practices that enable us to grasp how actors' identities become constructed are not part of the analysis.

Moving away from conventional constructivism, other authors engage in post-structural forms of discourse analysis to explain EU-Russia relations by looking at Western discourses.

Joenniemi acknowledges that the proof of Russia's belonging to Europe mostly regards various phases of history. In this respect, throughout history Russia was discursively represented as the 'true' and only guardian of the European Christian tradition, a 'first-

¹¹⁷ H. Haukkala, *Two Reluctant Regionalisers? The European Union and Russia in Europe's North. Programme on the Northern Dimension of the CFSP*. Working paper no. 32. Helsinki: The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 2001, quoted by S. Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, p. 38

rank European power', a 'defender of Europe' involved in the Crusades and in the battle against the Nazi threat.¹¹⁸

Other analysts focus more on identity construction and argue that it occurs through the delineation of a temporal Self rather than a spatial Other. Wæver, for example, argues that the EU is constructed not against an external Other – such as Russia – but rather against its 'temporal Other', that is its own past.¹¹⁹ Thomas Diez instead holds that a territorial/geographical Other replaced the concept of 'temporal Other' as a modality of identification of post-war Europe.¹²⁰

While these authors put forward post-structuralist accounts, a methodological – rather than theoretical – critique could be moved that this critical constructivist/post-structuralist strand only looks at one side of the self-other relationship. Russia's belonging to Europe, for example is seen unilaterally from the perspective of Western European discourses. This is only one half of the story. Russian internal discourse and positions vis a vis the concept of Europe and Western Europe are neglected. The 'Other' is exclusively associated with Russia, therefore, Western Europe is Self, entitled to measure the 'degree of Otherness' of Russia.

To address this shortcoming, another critical constructivist strand looks at the difference between actors' identities as they have emerged through mutual discourses rather than only from a Western perspective. The difference in actors' identities is problematised¹²¹ and the EU-Russia relationship is examined through the concepts of 'othering' and the 'degree of Otherness'. These concepts enable critical constructivism to avoid the exogenous nature of actors' identity and ultimately, to explain 'how' – as opposed to 'why' – both tension and cooperation between actors occurs. It follows that discursive 'othering' needs to consider both Self's and Other's perspectives. This enables us to grasp how Self and Other mutually construct their identities during their discursive interaction. In other words, other critical constructivists add that Other holds

¹¹⁸ P., Joenniemi, Introduction by Guest Editor: Russia's Narrative Resources, *Journal of International Relations and Development*, Vol.11, No.2, 2008, pp. 121-127

¹¹⁹ O., Wæver, Insecurity, Security and Asecurity in the West European Non-war Community in E., Adler, and M., Barnett, eds., *Security Communities*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, quoted by Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, p. 38

¹²⁰ T., Diez, Europe's Others and the Return of Geopolitics, *Cambridge Review of International Studies*, Vol. 17, No.2, 2004, quoted by Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, p. 38

¹²¹ See for example Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*

constitutive power over the construction of Self's identity. For example, Neumann and Makarychev analysed how, in EU-Russia relations, internal identity discourse and the foreign policy debate in Russia are not only interrelated¹²² but they also contribute to the construction of the West's identity.¹²³

In general, on one side, critical readings examine how the EU's discursive challenge impacts on the internal Russian debate and contributes to the construction of Russia either as a member of Western civilisation, or as a Eurasian/special/different power. However, on the other side these accounts add a focus on how the EU's discourse that constructs Russia (e.g. as an 'object'), also contributes to the articulation of the EU's subjectivity. In fact, thanks to the focus on the 'constitutive power of outside', it is possible to understand how the EU's discourse on the Russian Other not only reinforces the EU's identity as a 'benevolent' civilisational project¹²⁴, but it also sheds light on how exclusion – rather than the claimed inclusion – is ultimately at the core of the EU's external security.¹²⁵

Similar readings also emphasise the value of the concept of 'Europe' as a 'signifier' in the Russian search for self-identification.¹²⁶ From this perspective, critical constructivists¹²⁷ have analysed specific case studies (e.g. Northern Dimension Initiative, Kaliningrad, Schengen) within EU-Russia relations as a way to focus on the mutual construction of identity. The emerging implication is that the debates around these issues go beyond EU-Russia relations. Rather these debates are framed through identity interaction between actors and tend to produce meaning for the construction of 'Europe' as a political project.

¹²² See Neumann, *Uses of the Other. "The East" in European Identity Formation*

See also T., Hopf, eds, *Understanding of Russian Foreign Policy*, USA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999.

¹²³ A., Makarychev, *Rebranding Russia: Norms, Politics and Power*, in N., Tocci, eds., *Who is a Normative Foreign Policy Actor? The European Union and its Global Partners*, CEPS Paperback Series, 2008, pp.156-211

See also S., Medvedev, *The Stalemate in Russia-EU Relations: Between Sovereignty and Europeanization*, in Hopf, *Russia's European choice*

¹²⁴ C.S., Browning, *The Region-Building Approach Revisited: The Continued Othering of Russia in Discourses of Region-Building in the European North*, *Geopolitics*, Vol.8, No.1, 2003, pp. 45-71.

¹²⁵ Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, p.40

¹²⁶ Heller, in Browning and Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*

See also V., Baranovsky, *Russia: A Part of Europe or Apart from Europe*, *International Affairs*, Royal Institute of International Affairs, Vol. 76, No. 3, Jul. 2000, pp. 443-458

¹²⁷ Browning, *The Region-Building Approach Revisited: The Continued Othering of Russia in Discourses of Region-Building in the European North*, pp.45-71

In fact, this mutual dynamic within EU-Russia relations influences the broader debate on Europe, which is in the middle of the interaction. In their discursive interaction, actors utilise the concept of 'Europe' as a basis for triggering the 'othering' process through, for example, the false/true dichotomy. From this perspective, by depicting Other as belonging to the 'false' Europe – that is, a flawed version of Europe –, Self (both EU and Russia) can claim its 'true' Europeanness.¹²⁸

As noted, post-structuralism draws from the critical constructivist tradition in that it conceptualises the Self/Other interaction and the mutual construction of identities in terms of discursive contestation for hegemony. In other words, post-structuralism adds an element of antagonism to the discursive 'othering'. This sheds light on how interaction is characterised by a discursive contestation where a counter-hegemonic discourse antagonises the established one. As discussed by Thomas Diez, the concept of hegemony does not result from a pre-given set of norms with fixed meanings, but rather the contest among competing norms and values contributes to constantly shape the meaning of hegemony.¹²⁹ From a post-structuralist perspective, political meaning is created as a result of this discursive contestation for hegemony over political discourses. This is because each discourse aims to establish the borders of its meaning over specific political concepts. In other words, each actor aims to fill the content of political concepts with the meaning of the specific discourse they advance. The dynamic of discursive antagonism explains, for example, why Russia resists the EU's normative expansion to acquire ownership on crucial political concepts such as democracy and sovereignty in Europe.

With reference to the concept of Europe, post-structuralist reading outlines how in Russian discourse, 'Europe' is a 'irreducible signifier' – neither fully incorporated into the political space of Self, nor fully rejected by the outside¹³⁰ – or an 'empty signifier' – an ambiguous entity with fuzzy borders that can be used as needed for meaning-

¹²⁸ V., Morozov, *Europe and the Boundaries of Russian Political Community*, paper presented at EUBorderConf Seminar, Copenhagen, 26 November 2004, quoted by M., Diez Albert, S., Stetter, eds., *The European Union and Border Conflict. The Power of Integration and Association*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p.156

See also Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*

¹²⁹ T.Diez, Normative power as hegemony, *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol.48, No 2, June 2013, p.194-210

¹³⁰ V., Morozov, *Inside/Outside. Europe and the Boundaries of Russian Political Community*, St. Petersburg State University, 2004, p.8

making.¹³¹ By virtue of this partial belonging to 'Europe', Russia finds ground for contesting any hegemonic attempt of the West or the EU to impose a discourse that excludes Russia from 'Europe'.¹³² Similarly, Russia can use such a partial belonging to advance a discourse in favour of its Eurasian essence as opposed to the European one. Against this background, Sergei Medvedev, for example, has studied how Russia's belonging to 'Europe' emerges from Russia's internal debate that sees a contestation between Europeanisation (Culture One) and sovereignty (Culture Two).¹³³

In general, a critique that can be moved to these strands analysing discursive contestation and shifts is methodological. In particular, the 'degree of sedimentation' of the discourses under examination is not adequately explored. As will be shown below, this research employs the layered structure elaborated by Ole Wæver that sets out the three levels on which various discourses are played out. This will provide a tool to explore more in depth how discourses are constructed in the first place.

The focus on exploring the 'degree of sedimentation' of discourses provides a basis to understand how the EU and Russia have constructed – throughout history – the narrative/story they tell about their identity. In short, such this approach ultimately contributes to explain EU-Russia relations through identity politics, but identities are layered and not given.

As noted above, the critical constructivist / post-structuralist approach provides a lens through which discursive differences, similarities and changes can be studied. This ultimately facilitates the theoretical understanding of the link between identity and policy (interests). Rather than simply identifying two constructions of identity as 'different', it is more relevant to focus on how this difference is discursively constituted and contested and how it is located in spatial, temporal and/or ethical constructions of identity. The analysis of EU-Russia relations as an interaction between Self/Other is important because it derives the formation of identity and interests not through an

¹³¹ A., Makarychev, *Russia's Discursive Construction of Europe and Herself: Towards New Spatial Imaginery*, draft of the paper presented at the Conference on 'Post-soviet In/Security: Theory and Practice', Mereson Center of the Ohio State University, 7-8 October 2005

¹³² S., Rogov, *Nasha strana mozhet okazat'sia na zadvorkakh Evropy*, *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 16 June 1999, quoted by Morozov, *Inside/Outside. Europe and the Boundaries of Russian Political Community*, p.8

¹³³ S., Medvedev, *Power, Space, and Russian Foreign Policy*, in Hopf, *Understanding of Russian Foreign Policy*
See also Medvedev, in Hopf, *Russia's European choice*

impersonal and anarchic structure, nor through the undifferentiated concept of collective identity, but through a relational and contested process based on difference and similarity and supported by a discursive approach.

The above-mentioned critical and post-structuralist readings have definitely provided a more comprehensive understanding of EU-Russia relations by focussing on issues such as mutual identity formation, the constitutive power of the outside, and the struggle over the political construction of 'Europe' from a perspective of discursive contest. The aim of this thesis is to apply such a theoretical apparatus to the case of energy relations between the EU and Russia. In order to do so, the next section provides an overview of the existing literature on EU-Russia energy relations.

5 Literature on EU-Russia Energy Relations

This thesis examines EU-Russia relations through the prism of the energy relationship between the parties. In light of its policy relevance, energy is a good case for understanding how a deeper discursive contest underpins the mere technical aspects of the relationship. In other words, this thesis considers the energy relationship between the EU and Russia as more than a conflict over technical issues. It is rather an identity-based issue that ultimately reveals a contestation for hegemony over the construction of 'Europe' as a political project. In particular, the aim is to investigate EU-Russia energy relations through a critical constructivist / post-structuralist lens and consequently infer what such an approach can tell us about the broader dimension of the EU-Russia relationship. In order to adequately locate the thesis, a specific literature review of EU-Russia energy relations needs to be explored.

The mainstream literature on the EU-Russia energy relationship can be divided into two groups. The first examines the nature of the energy relationship under the liberal prism of interdependence. In particular, the interdependence paradigm has been primarily applied to EU–Russia gas relationship described as a field where actors have a common interest in cooperation, with this seen as likely to spill over beyond energy relations into other fields. The EU's 2004 enlargement – that included eight states from Central and Eastern Europe historically dependent on Russian energy – indicates that the degree of

interdependence has increased.¹³⁴ From this perspective, for some, such as the Russian politician and diplomat Sergey Yastrzhembsky¹³⁵, interdependence is positive for both Russia – that depends on stable long-term European demand – and for the EU – that depends on Russia’s stable supply. From this perspective, interdependence means that energy is a common platform that can only consolidate the strategic relationship between the EU and Russia and trigger win-win cooperation. Energy cooperation is seen as a mutually beneficial partnership likely to promote cooperation in other fields.¹³⁶ Given that the two actors have no better options for the time being – Russia lacks more preferable markets, while the EU lacks alternative sources – they try to support and promote their energy relationship in order to continue to benefit from it.¹³⁷ In this respect, for Monaghan and Montanaro-Jankovski¹³⁸, the EU’s relationship with Russia is reciprocal and mutually supportive, since neither party has an interest in losing the other, which represents a crucial factor of their respective energy and economic security.

However, contrary to neoliberal expectations, the prospect of increased EU dependence on Russian energy has also created fears in the EU that the Kremlin could exploit this vulnerability as a diplomatic leverage. These concerns became evident in January 2006 when Russia cut off gas supplies to Ukraine and consequently also to Member States (MS) of the EU since Ukraine is a transit country for Russian supplies to Western Europe. As a result, Russia’s reliability has been strongly questioned by the EU, which, as a result, put increasing emphasis on the need to diversify energy imports from non-Russian sources. The choice to diversify sources has been justified by arguing that a situation of overreliance on one exporter creates concerns related to energy security, which instead is more reliable if imports diversify. Concerns, however, also came from Moscow who became more aware of its increased overreliance on the EU market.

In this light, the ‘shadow on the future’ and the spill-over effect hypothesised by (neo)liberals do not seem to have occurred as a result of the mutual energy

¹³⁴ D., Johnson, EU-Russia Energy Links: A Marriage of Convenience?, *Government and Opposition*, Vol.40, No. 2, 2004, pp.256-277

¹³⁵ K., Barysch, eds., *Pipelines, Politics and Power. The Future of EU-Russia Energy Relations*, London: Centre for European Reforms, 2008

¹³⁶ A., Piebalgs, Win-Win Co-operation is Possible in Energy, in Barysch, *Pipelines, Politics and Power*, pp. 53-59

¹³⁷ F., Proedrou, The EU-Russia Energy Approach under the Prism of Interdependence, *European Security*, Vol.16, No 3-4, Sept-Dec. 2007, pp. 329-355

¹³⁸ A., Monaghan, and L., Montanaro-Jankovski, *EU–Russia Energy Relations: The Need for Active Engagement*, EPC Issue Paper No.45, 2006

interdependence. Rather, interdependence creates problems and anxieties and is actually having the opposite effect of inscribing actors' positions in confrontational terms: the EU's diversification may undermine Russia's position as the main exporter in the EU's market, whereas Russian concern about overreliance may undermine the EU's security of supply.

Drawing from the liberal-inspired 'transitionalist' strand, a further strand of the literature on EU-Russia energy relations positions the EU's liberal approach to energy policy as the term of reference from which Russia has recently moved away. The energy crisis and tensions derive from Russia's detachment from the EU's liberal standards. According to Kaveshnikov, the dissimilar nature of energy markets and economic interests on both sides ultimately generates such disengagement.¹³⁹ The assumption of such a strand is that Russia has opted for state intervention and control of natural resources, thus deviating from the EU's model of energy governance, that is, a liberalised energy market. In this light, Russian nationalism – which downplayed the principle of an open market in energy governance – puts at risk the established international energy market institutions and the EU's energy security.¹⁴⁰ Generally, these explanations suggest that Russia should return to liberal energy governance in order to 'normalise' its energy relations with the EU.¹⁴¹

Overall, the EU's liberal energy governance stands as the reference point against which the validity of Russian energy governance is measured. As a result, authors of this strand assume the liberal market approach as the dominant/preferred model of energy governance. It follows, that the impact of Russia's energy practices and governance on the interaction is neglected. This characterises the relationship as static and unilateral with no attention to how a change of actors' positions and their energy governance

¹³⁹ N. Kaveshnikov, The Issue of Energy Security in Relations Between Russia and the European Union, *European Security*, Vol. 19, 2010, p. 598

¹⁴⁰ A. Correlje, and C., van der Linde, Energy Supply Security and Geopolitics: A European perspective, *Energy Policy*, Vol.34, Issue 5, 2006, pp. 532–543

See also D., Finon, and C., Locatelli, Russian and European Gas and Interdependence: Could Contractual Trade Channel Geopolitics?, *Energy Policy*, Vol.36, No.1, 2008, pp. 423–442

See also D., Yergin, Ensuring Energy Security, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 85, No. 2, 2006, pp. 69-82, quoted by C., Kuzemko, (in press), Ideas Power and Change: Explaining EU–Russia Energy Relations, *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 21, Issue 1, 2013, p. 59

¹⁴¹ F., Erixon, *Europe's Energy Dependency and Russia's Commercial Assertiveness*, The European Centre for International Political Economy, Policy Brief No. 07/2008, quoted by Kuzemko, (2013), *Ideas Power and Change: Explaining EU–Russia Energy Relation*, p. 59

See also E.F., van der Meulen, Gas Supply and EU-Russia Relations, *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 61, Issue 51, July 2009, pp. 833-856

occurs as a result of interaction. Rather, emphasis is put on material factors such as the EU's declining oil and gas production and Russia's large reserves. In other words, authors tend to overlook the implications of the energy relationship on the broader level of EU-Russia relations. Rather, they focus too much on describing the reasons behind the partners' disagreements over technical issues related to energy.

Other existing accounts are located between rationalism (especially neoliberalism) and conventional constructivism. They maintain the assumption that the EU's liberal approach to energy policy is the benchmark from which Russia is moving away. But, they provide an historical background to explain the origin of such an assumption, and conclude that the actors simply hold different understandings of energy security. In a historical perspective, Russian development in its energy policy is measured against the Western (EU/US) liberal principle that became dominant after the collapse of the USSR in the 1990s. The implication of this reading is that the liberal model of energy governance as it has emerged during the post-Cold War period, reinforced the EU's position and image as a 'teacher' – that prefers economic over political logics – and, in turn, determines the Russian position as a 'learner' that instead, still tends to prioritise (geo)political calculations.

The dominance of liberal principles allowed the EU to sit on the privileged side in the post-Cold War negotiations with Russia on a number of fields, including energy.¹⁴² Therefore, such dominance contributed to the creation of a rule maker/rule taker dichotomy.¹⁴³ The EU's privileged position as 'teacher' explains why energy-related policies – such as the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) and the EU–Russia Energy Dialogue (ED) – have been read by some as evidence of the EU's objective to introduce pro-market and liberal principles into Russia.¹⁴⁴ Similarly, Russia's privatisation of its energy sector in the 1990s is, therefore, seen as the effort of a 'learner' to learn this

¹⁴² H., Haukkala, Lost in Translation? Why the EU Has Failed to Influence Russia's Development, *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol.61, No.10, 2009, p.1762, quoted by Kuzemko, *Ideas Power and Change: Explaining EU–Russia Energy Relations*, p. 73

See also R., Youngs, *The EU's Role in World Politics: A Retreat from Liberal Internationalism*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2010, quoted by Kuzemko, *Ideas Power and Change: Explaining EU–Russia Energy Relations*, p.73

¹⁴³ See T., Romanova, The Russian Perspective on the Energy Dialogue, *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, Vol.16, No.2, 2008, p. 220

¹⁴⁴ H., Haukkala, *The Relevance of Norms and Values in the EU's Russia Policy*, Ulkopoliittinen Instituutti (UPI) Working Papers 52, 2005, quoted by Kuzemko, *Ideas Power and Change: Explaining EU–Russia Energy Relations*, p.63

See also Romanova, *The Russian Perspective on the Energy Dialogue*, quoted by Kuzemko, *Ideas Power and Change: Explaining EU–Russia Energy Relations*, p.63

lesson. This distinction provided the basis to assume that the EU and Russia are ultimately two different actors that understand energy security along different logics. Russia aims to have energy relations with the EU based on the principle of reciprocity in access to the market and mutual guarantees. For Russia, energy security is part of its national and foreign policy and it is fundamental for its post-Cold War reconstruction. This view does not match with the EU's holistic aim of establishing a wider European energy market based on market values and rules – such as energy efficiency and liberalisation – already advanced within the EU.¹⁴⁵ As such, progress or dissatisfaction related to their energy relations arises from the radically different understanding of energy that the EU and Russia hold. For Hadfield, such a difference is at the basis of the failure of common projects and policies.¹⁴⁶

However, these readings fail to consider that the liberal paradigm might no longer be the dominant one. As such, the tendency to make such an assumption contributes to making these approaches static and one-sided. Little attention is, in fact, paid to analyse how Russia has been able to challenge the alleged dominance of the liberal approach to energy. The identity construction process – the EU as ‘teacher’ and Russia as ‘learner’ – is analysed only in the direction of the EU that, as a liberal-inspired actor, determines Russia's position as a ‘learner’. As such, the constitutive power of the outside (e.g. Russia) on Self's identity (e.g. EU) is not taken into account. In other words, the degree of internal discursive contestation – especially on the Russian side – and Russia's ‘othering’ of the EU is largely understated.

Regarding the different understandings of energy security held by these actors, a kind of state-centric perspective is here adopted since the two actors are connected through their identity claims. The unstable and fluid nature of identity and its claims is lacking. From this perspective, it can be argued that this strand of the energy literature draws from conventional constructivism.

In addition, these works devote little time to the reflection on what EU-Russia energy relations may mean for the political construction of Europe and for the EU-Russia relationship beyond the ‘teacher’/‘learner’ dichotomy.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ Romanova, *The Russian Perspective on the Energy Dialogue*, p.229

¹⁴⁶ A., Hadfield, EU-Russia Energy Relations: Aggregation and Aggravation, *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, Vol.16, No. 2, 2008, pp. 231-248

¹⁴⁷ Other conventional constructivist approaches go beyond the issue of interdependency and different models of governance and acknowledge the impact of the external Russian challenges (Other) as a key factor that determines the EU-Russia energy relations. For example, the fact that Russia, through Gazprom, ran rings around the EU with building bilateral links with individual EU members can be

Moving to a realist reading of EU-Russia energy relations, some works inspired by the neo-classical realism focus on the impact of domestic intervening variables on the decision of a state's foreign energy policies. As such, in order to provide a complete picture of the energy relationship, internal policies of the EU and Russia should also be taken into account.¹⁴⁸ Other neorealist-inspired approaches stress that Russia's pragmatic approach reveals a zero-sum understanding of its energy relations with the EU. Thus, Russia uses its energy exports for political and security purposes especially in its relations with ex-Soviet countries such as Ukraine, Poland and the Baltics in order to counter-balance the EU's political expansion.¹⁴⁹

Generally speaking, these accounts only describe 'why' the tension arises (conflict of interests) and do not explore 'how' it was politically constructed and produced. The alleged tension is assumed and not problematised. In addition, issues related to actors' identities are neglected.

To address this gap, Lisa Pick¹⁵⁰ deconstructs the perspective of the existing literature, which describes a situation where the EU aims to trigger changes in Russia by projecting its liberalised and rule based agenda (social constructivism); while Russia operates as a neo-realist actor exploiting its energy exports for political reasons. However, while – through a critical approach – she deconstructs the assumed difference proposed by the existing literature, Pick does not adequately engage in discourse analysis. Thus she fails to look at how actors' views emerge as a result of discursive contestation over competing discourses. In a way, she sticks to a critical perspective without adding the post-structuralism focus on how various discourses compete to emerge as 'dominant'.

considered as an example of external challenge. See, for example, Helm, D., *The Russian Dimension and Europe's External Energy Policy*, 2007. Available from: http://www.dieterhelm.co.uk/sites/default/files/Russian_dimension.pdf Accessed 28/01/2013

¹⁴⁸ A.R., Spanjer, *The Impact of a New Regulatory Focus on Current Gas Regulation: The Case of Unbundling*, Papers and Proceedings of the 9th European Conference of the International, 2009. Association for Energy Economics, 10–13 June, Florence, Italy.

See also N., Simonia, *Energy Animosity-Reality or Construct*, *Russia in Global Affairs*, Vol. 6, No.3, 2008, pp.128-134

¹⁴⁹ See for example K. Barysch, (2007), Light, M. (2008), K.C. Smith, (2004) quoted by L., Pick, EU-Russia energy relations: A critical analysis, *POLIS Journal*, Vol. 7, Summer 2012, p.323

¹⁵⁰ Pick, *EU-Russia energy relations: A critical analysis*

From this perspective, another strand of the literature on EU-Russia energy relations started to move away from strict rationalist and conventional constructivist accounts to explanations that focused on the discursive dimension of such a complex relationship. Since these discourse-based approaches are the main contenders of this study, it is necessary to further detail their arguments and limitations as a way to understand how this study fits in.

Policy paradigms such as ‘Kuwaitisation’ and ‘Liberalisation’ have been used to explain Russia’s energy policy¹⁵¹ in general, and competing foreign energy paradigms within the EU-Russia context.¹⁵² ‘Kuwaitisation’ refers to a situation in which Russia derives a comparative advantage from exploitation of its natural resources. An alternative paradigm of ‘Liberalisation’ postulates that economic liberalisation through market forces and the removal of state restrictions represent the only means for Russia to develop. In this light, Russia’s internal debate over production sharing agreements (PSAs) and the ECT proposed by the EU have been characterised by the opposition of these two paradigms: Kuwaitisation versus Liberalisation.¹⁵³

With reference to the understanding of EU’s energy policy, other works focused on internal discourses to understand what the European Commission (EC), EU Parliament and MSs mean by energy security. The focus on the main discourses of institutions provided the basis to understand where energy policies (interests) arise. It also demonstrated why specific discourses of the EC and the European Parliament about energy were not able to mobilise support and become dominant.¹⁵⁴ Similarly, Kuzemko¹⁵⁵ focuses on the degree of ideological contestation occurring within and between the EU institutions. Such an analysis enables one to problematise the common representation of the EU as a liberal market energy actor.

In studying EU-Russia energy relations through discourses, Khasson evaluates the influence and clashes of the main EU discourses: the first focuses on the need to integrate Russia, the second on the need to securitise energy supply through

¹⁵¹ P., Rutland, Oil Politics and Foreign Policy in D., Lane, eds, *The Political Economy of Russian Oil*, Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999, pp 163-188

¹⁵² Johnson, *EU-Russia Energy Links: A Marriage of Convenience?*, p.256

¹⁵³ P., Rutland, Oil Politics and Foreign Policy in D., Lane, eds, *The Political Economy of Russian Oil*, Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999, pp 163-188

¹⁵⁴ M., Natorski, and A., Herranz Surralles, Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union’s Energy Policy, *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, Vol.4, No2, 2008, pp71-89

¹⁵⁵ Kuzemko, *Ideas Power and Change: Explaining EU–Russia Energy Relations*

diversification. The author notes that, following the recent supply crisis, the securitisation discourse currently dominates the EU's internal debate but at the same time it obstructs the integrative process occurring in the context of the EU-Russia ED.¹⁵⁶

These discourse-based approaches overcome the materialism of rationalism by focusing on social factors such as discourses. They also go beyond the state-centrism of conventional constructivism since they investigate the degree of discursive contestation occurring within the actors' internal debate. However, these energy debates are one-sided; they are either investigated within the EU or within Russia. The role of the Self/Other discursive encounter in the policy field of energy is neglected. As a result, the constitutive role of outside is understated.

As such, Kratochvil and Tichy¹⁵⁷ combine the two perspectives by focusing on the speeches of both the Russian and EU policymakers. The texts and speeches analysed present 'regularity' around common themes. This enables the authors to construct three separate discourses on integration, liberalisation and diversification. However, while this study focuses extensively on energy discourse, it fails to provide a historical narrative framework. In other words, energy discourses are not historically contextualised within the framework of EU-Russia relations. The authors do not historically ground the energy discourses identified; rather the focus is only on the level of analysis of discursive practices in the energy field. In doing so, the study fails to illustrate the broader political implications of energy for wider EU-Russia relations. A similar critique can be applied to the work of Feklyunina who explores how EU's image of Russia as reliable energy partner has been affected as a result of the gas dispute between Ukraine and Russia.¹⁵⁸ Despite the effort to provide an explanation based on representations, little attention is paid on how Russia's image was historically constructed from outside.

This provides the ground to illustrate a common problem with these explanations, which is their failure to account for the influence of social and historical factors in the

¹⁵⁶ V., Khasson, *Discourses and Interests in EU-Russia Energy Relations*, Baillet Latour Working Paper, No. 35, 2008-2009

¹⁵⁷ L., Tichy, P., Kratochvil, EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations, *Energy Policy*, Vol. 56, 2013, pp. 391-406

¹⁵⁸ V., Feklyunina, Russia's International Images and its Energy Policy. An Unreliable Supplier?, *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vo.64, No.3, May 2012, pp. 449-469

formation of their energy governance. To fill this gap, Aalto focuses on social and political factors in his analysis. He also includes an historical dimension to examine the past and the present of the European energy debate and, assess how this debate fits into the broader discourse of wider European integration. He notes that a contestation took place between two discourses told by the EU's leaders and experts on European integration: economic vs political (normative) integration. The first considers European integration in terms of an economically cooperative project that emerged as a result of the mutual material interests of involved states. The second holds that European integration is a political and normative project that arises from a peculiar historical period where peace was needed to avoid future wars among participating states. Against this background, Aalto demonstrates how EU leaders have extensively used the discourse of economic integration to explain the EU-Russia ED.¹⁵⁹

Aalto's analysis puts the EU Self in interaction with its own past. The discourse of integration to be used towards Russia is derived from the temporal Self. Little attention is however devoted to the constitutive role of the Russian Other and to the implication for the construction of 'Europe' as a political project. Morozov complements this analysis by re-establishing a Self/Other identity interaction and illustrating the wider political implications on the political construction of 'Europe' as they arise from the debate around the EU-Russia ED. Technical issues of the relations are considered as indicative of actors' identities. These identities express two projects for the political construction of 'Europe', which are in tension and in constant re-articulation: the 'imperial' EU on one side, and the 'sovereign' Russia, on the other. The fact that the interaction between these projects occurs also in the EU-Russia ED, confirms how a struggle for the political construction of Europe results from the parties' interaction on technical issues.¹⁶⁰

Generally, the discourse-based strand of EU-Russia energy relations has contributed to turning the focus from the analysis of a technical issue to a more comprehensive examination of the political dynamics of the relations. Actors' differences do not merely rely on individual interests and material capabilities, but also on how this difference is

¹⁵⁹ P., Aalto, The EU-Russia Energy Dialogue and the Future of European Integration: From Economic to Politico-Normative Narratives, in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe's Future Energy Security*, pp. 23–41

¹⁶⁰ Morozov, in Aalto, (2008), *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe's Future Energy Security*

told. Actors' interests and their utility functions are not given a priori but unfold in the discursive contestation.

However, the existing analysis still pays too little attention to the historical representations of Other and the role of 'otherness' in the explanation of actors' energy relations. These works should be complemented by a coherent methodology that allows understanding of how the narratives identified from the historical encounter of the actors influence the actors' energy paradigms and discursive practices performed in the energy fields. It is, therefore, necessary to complement the existing critical/post-structuralist accounts by illustrating the link between the three levels of analysis – historical narratives and policy discourses. Therefore, the last part of this chapter illustrates the contributions of this thesis to the discursive strand of the literature on EU-Russia energy relations.

6 Contributions and Conclusions

This chapter has argued that attention to the discursive structure and identity interaction rather than to material factors provides a better explanation of the current status of EU-Russia energy relations. From this perspective, the energy policy towards each other is based not only on interests and material capabilities, but also on the identity interaction emerging from the discursive encounter of actors in historical narratives and policy discourses.

Conventional constructivism and rationalism do not adequately substantiate the complexity of the power relations between the EU and Russia by simply assuming identities (rationalism) and their difference (conventional constructivism).

The critical constructivist / post-structuralist approach argues that identity is layered and constructed through a Self/Other discursive interaction. For the discursive interaction to produce meaning, it is necessary to produce meaningful boundaries beyond the basic Schmittean black and white divide. This should be complemented by an analysis that measures how alien the Other is (e.g. 'degree of Otherness'). This presupposes outsiders possess constitutive power. The fact that the 'degree of Otherness' measures the diversity between Self and Others is the key factor that overcomes the bias of the existing (rationalist and mainstream constructivist) literature on EU-Russia (energy)

relations that, as noted aims to explain an assumed tension between actors. The critical constructivist / post-structuralist approach challenges and problematises such an assumption and opens up the possibility of conceptualising ‘otherness’ not only as threatening or confrontational but also in terms of cooperation and partnership.¹⁶¹ In this light, the critical constructivist / post-structuralist tradition enables one to deconstruct the rationalist and conventional constructivist belief that the interests and identities of the EU and Russia are simply different and in conflict. The added value of the proposed approach is to indicate the way through which ‘difference’, ‘similarities’ and ‘changes’ should be investigated.¹⁶²

From this perspective, the post-structuralist reliance on the discursive contestation provides the means to better understand the political meaning of EU-Russia energy relations for both broader EU-Russia relations and the construction of ‘Europe’ as a political project. As such, this research is in this respect close to the approach elaborated by Aalto and Morozov.¹⁶³ By investigating the way in which EU-Russia energy relations are played out, it is possible to understand the different or similar political projects concerning Europe’s construction which are upheld by the EU and Russia, and how they cooperate or strive to impose their own projects and, as a consequence, how the EU and Russia construct their specific interests in their energy partnership. This arises from an understanding of energy security as something more than a mere exporter-importer relation or as a mere issue in EU-Russia relations but rather as something impacting on the identity formation of the actors. As a result, this study sets aside the technical, material and institutional aspects of the relationship. It rather focuses on exploring the discursive framework – and on the resulting representations – characterising the energy relationship between the EU and Russia. As such, the methodological spotlight will be on how discourses have formed and evolved through policy documents, speeches and symbolic acts. In particular, this research examined texts (official documents and speeches) and symbolic acts from the representatives of the ruling elite – mainly the president, prime-minister and key ministries for Russia; the

¹⁶¹ W., Connolly, Taylor, Foucault and otherness, *Political Theory*, Vol. 13, No. 3, 1985, p. 371, quoted by Browning and Christou, *The Constitutive Power of Outsiders: The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Dimension*, p. 110

See also I. B., Neumann, Identity and Security, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 29, No.2, 1992, pp.221-226, quoted by Browning, Christou, *The Constitutive Power of Outsiders: The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Dimension*, p.110

¹⁶² Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, p.6

¹⁶³ Morozov, in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe’s Future Energy Security*

President of the Commission and Commissioners, for the EU.

The ‘degree of sedimentation’ of the discourses composing this discursive framework is investigated in three levels of analysis (layers): the first related to the history of relations between Western Europe and Russia (historical narratives and representations), the second related to the field of energy security (energy policy paradigms), the third related to the actual written texts, speeches and symbolic acts played out in the Nabucco-South Stream pipeline politics and the EU-Russia ED (discursive practices). The examination of these dimensions aims to investigate both the ‘degree of Otherness’ and the kind of ‘otherness’. This is because the ‘degree of Otherness’ not only ranges from positive to negative¹⁶⁴, but it encompasses a number of possibilities beyond the mere enemy-friend dichotomy¹⁶⁵, such as superiority and emulation. From this perspective this thesis hypothesises that analysing EU-Russia energy relations as a Self/Other discursive interaction enables one to investigate the ‘degree of Otherness’, which ultimately explains the alternation between the cooperative and conflicting positions of actors. Such an analysis also illustrates the meaning of energy for the broader relations between the EU and Russia and for the construction of Europe as a political project.

In conclusion, the existing discursive literature on EU-Russia energy relations has barely hinted at critical / post-structuralist concepts – such as discursive contestation, ‘degree of Otherness’, ‘degree of sedimentation’ of discourses, constitutive role of outside and historical narrative and representations – to explain such a relation. The existing literature has exclusively focused on the level of analysis regarding ‘energy policy paradigms’ (i.e. comparable to layer two). This thesis not only adds a broader level of ‘sedimentation’ of energy paradigms (i.e. historical) but it studies how this broader level influences energy paradigms and, in turn, discursive practices (layer three). Therefore, this research in fact dedicates the entire Chapter 3 to unearth the dominant historical narratives and representations through which Self represented Other. The historical analysis dates back to the eighteenth century in the case of Russia, and to the early contact with Muscovy in the case of Western Europe. Chapter 4 will then demonstrate how the identified historical narratives are reflected in the energy

¹⁶⁴ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, pp. 37-41

¹⁶⁵ Browning and Christou, *The Constitutive Power of Outsiders: The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Dimension*, p. 110

paradigms that actors play out towards each other. Finally, in order to produce new empirical data, this thesis applies the identified discursive framework – resulting from layer one and layer two – to explain the ‘degree of Otherness’ in the Nabucco-South Stream pipeline politics and the EU-Russia ED. As noted, in order to uncover the discursive framework, this research adopts the layered structure of meaning elaborated by Ole Wæver. This, along with the emphasis on discursive analysis, represents the leading methodology of this thesis. Therefore, the next chapter will discuss in more detail the methodological principles underpinning this research.

Chapter 2 – Methodology and Data

1 Introduction

Chapter 1 suggested some key principles of the post-structuralist discursive approach, which represents the leading methodology of this research. Chapter 2 aims to detail and explore this methodology. The first section will explain the methodological debate in IR between rationalism/positivism and reflectivism. Given the aim to explain social phenomena through discursive contestation, critical constructivism / post-structuralism can be subsumed under a reflectivist methodology that relies on discourse-analysis. Therefore, the aim of the first section is to explain the principles and advantages of the proposed approach compared to a positivist / rationalist approach. In particular, the relation between identity and discourse and language will be investigated, with this following a discussion of the importance of discursive contestation to contextualise debates. The second section provides guidelines on how this research applies the specified discursive methodology to gain an understanding of EU-Russia energy relations. On this basis, a detailed research design will be provided. In particular, to support the building of this research design, many of the references will be to Hansen's¹⁶⁶ practical approach to discourse analysis and to the three-layered structure of meaning elaborated by Ole Wæver.¹⁶⁷ The three-layered structure of meaning is the main practical guide for this research and it ultimately denotes the methodological contribution of this study to the existing discourse-based accounts of EU-Russia energy relations.

The dispute between rationalism / positivism (which includes realist and liberal approaches, but also others such as Marxism) on the one hand, and reflectivism (including critical theory, post-structuralism, post-modernism, feminism) on the other hand, represents a methodological debate in IR.¹⁶⁸ Rationalism relies on falsification and validation as leading principles to access knowledge and to understand reality. Reflectivism focuses on interpretation and subjectivity (identity) and emphasises the socially constructed nature of knowledge and social reality. Reflectivism attempts to reveal the power contest behind concepts (e.g. democracy vs autocracy) and 'recover

¹⁶⁶ See Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*

¹⁶⁷ See Wæver in Wæver, and Hansen, *European Integration and National Identity*

¹⁶⁸ As observed, conventional constructivism represents a 'via media' between the two.

the meaning that actors give to their activities’¹⁶⁹ by using language and discursive antagonism as a source of meaning in the power contest. From this perspective, meaning is not intrinsic in the objects or actions that can be observed. Rather, meaning is continually articulated through changes in social activities. At the heart of this perspective lies the principle that language, and thus discourse, produces social reality, which can fluctuate across cultures and time.¹⁷⁰

Critical constructivist / post-structuralist discourse analysis has been chosen because it can offer a more significant understanding of EU-Russia energy relations than both the mainstream IR tradition and other discourse-based accounts. In fact, the proposed approach avoids merely describing the tension and conflict within the context of EU-Russia energy relations. This scenario seems to represent the starting point of many existing rationalist accounts. However, this is only one of the possible options. The proposed approach, instead, embraces the possibility that cooperation and partnership can equally occur. In addition, it also sheds light on the political significance of energy relations both for broader EU-Russia relations and for the contest between the two actors over the political construction of ‘Europe’. Unlike other discourse-based explanations, it will be shown how the application of Wæver’s methodology helps us to understand how the discursive contestation underlies the energy relations between the EU and Russia and how historical representations of the Self in relation to the Other (layer one) is reflected in their mutual energy relations (layer two) and discursive practices (layer three).

As noted in the previous chapter, the role of the Other’s identity in IR is divisive: either it is taken for granted as ‘different’ (conventional constructivism), or it is neglected (rationalism). Yet, in the examination of the specific case of relations between the EU and Russia, both choices are misleading. The constitutive role of the Other for self-identification was key for the identity formation of Western Europe / EU and Russia as a ‘European’ power. The constitutive role of the Other, it is argued, can therefore offer an understanding of EU-Russia relations. It follows that the decision to focus on the energy relations between these actors lies in the hypothesis that the dynamic of the constitutive outside can also be found at the level of their mutual energy relations

¹⁶⁹ S. Hobden, and J., R., Wyn, *Marxist Theories of International Relations*, in J., Baylis, S., Smith, and P., Owens, eds., *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford - New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press 2008, p.151

¹⁷⁰ W.A., Darity, *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2008, pp. 398-401

which, consequently, has political implications for the broader EU-Russia relationship and for their political projects of ‘Europe’.

The importance of the constitutive role of the outsider will emerge more clearly in chapter 3, which will deal with history. Here it will be noted how Russian thinkers have been trying to answer the question of Russia’s self-identity since 1830. The various answers provided to this question contributed to the development of a specific understanding of ‘Europe’ and of Western Europe (or the West). On the other hand, in Western Europeans’ representations of Russia, the concept of ‘Europe’ was imagined as a Concert of Great Powers in which Russia was perceived as either a ‘learner’, a ‘threat’ or as an ‘equal’ participant within the Concert. Through the examination of the historical narratives put forward by Western Europeans and Russians to identify themselves in relation to the Other, it is possible to detect claims about competing or compatible identities and to illustrate how these claims have been central to determining the constitutive role of outsiders.

Having addressed these crucial questions – why adopt a critical / post-structuralist discursive approach and why focus on EU-Russia energy relations – the next section will locate the post-structuralist discursive approach in IR methodological debates and explore its main sources.

1.1 Locating Discourse Theory in the IR Methodological Debate

Generally, discourse theory is placed within a deconstructive and anti-essentialist tradition of enquiry opposed to positivism. Fuss defines essentialism as “a belief in the real, true essence of things, the invariable and fixed properties which define the ‘whatness’ of a given entity”.¹⁷¹ Conversely, the notion of anti-essentialism opposes this stance and argues that the ‘whatness’ of any given entity is socially constructed. Rather than investigating explanations of behaviours based on cause-effect relations, the research agenda of discourse theory aims to understand how identities and meaning are socially produced.¹⁷² Political identities are always relational, historically and discursively produced. As such, they are the result of a contingent and unstable

¹⁷¹ D., Fuss, *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference*, New York: Routledge, 1989, p. ix

¹⁷² B., Sayyid, L., Zac, *Political Analysis in a World without Foundation*, in Scarbrough, E., Tanenbaum, E., eds., *Research strategies in the social sciences*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 251

construction. Thus, discourse analysts reject the existence of empirical phenomena generating identities and accept the irreducible gap between objectivity and its representation.¹⁷³ Following the specific French epistemological tradition headed by Foucault, objects are not ‘given’ by the world of experience and facts, but are constructed in specific systems of knowledge. In ‘Madness and Civilization’, Foucault illustrates how the object of mental illness derives from the ‘rules of formation’ of psychiatric discourse, and does not exist a priori.¹⁷⁴ In ‘The Archaeology of Knowledge’, he adds that psychiatric discourse does not reflect a specific object, but is the result of the way in which dispersed objects are put together.¹⁷⁵ Questions of ‘truth’ and ‘falsity’ turn out to be subject to criteria set by the knowledge and rules existing within discourse. In this light, discursive analysis aims to detect the rules of discourses, how they are constructed, and how actors identify themselves discursively. In this respect, discourse theory draws on the works of Heidegger, Kuhn, Wittgenstein and Foucault who discarded the notion of ‘objectivity’ in favour of that of ‘meaning’.¹⁷⁶

From this perspective, the positivist / rationalist analysis of society based on casual laws is thus questioned by the reflectivist focus on social behaviour and its interpretation. As noted, on one side, the rationalist / positivist methodology explains social phenomena through the cause / effect relationship (what caused what). On the other side, the reflectivist methodology explains the same social phenomena by investigating how it was possible, meaningful and how it can be interpreted. In addition, rationalist approaches to social science give priority to explanation but they neglect the discourse of social agents and their understanding of the world. In fact, a deeper relationship between understanding and explanation exists. For Winch ‘understanding is the goal of explanation and the end-product of successful explanation’.¹⁷⁷ Following this reading, explanation is based on understanding. Instead, drawing from reflectivism, critical constructivism / post-structuralism believes that explanation is supported through categories, which are manifest in a specific conceptual language (e.g. Self / Other, antagonism / equivalence, or recognition / hegemony). When the Self is in the process of identifying itself it tends to make categories. By doing so, the Self produces a

¹⁷³ Howarth, Discourse Theory and Political Analysis, in Scarbrough, Tanenbaum, *Research strategies in the social sciences*, pp. 282-283

¹⁷⁴ Howarth, *Ibidem*

¹⁷⁵ M., Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1972, p.48

¹⁷⁶ Howarth, in Scarbrough, Tanenbaum, *Research strategies in the social sciences*, p.283

¹⁷⁷ Winch, P., *The Idea of a Social Science and its Relation to Philosophy*, London: Routledge, 1990, p.x

positive inner identity opposed to that of the Other. This self-identification occurs through the 'us / 'them' dichotomy, which contributes to construct 'otherness'. By measuring the 'degree of otherness' – that is, how alien the Other is on a continuum from sameness (equivalence) to radical difference (antagonism) – it is possible to decipher if the Other is a friendly or an antagonist entity. The measurement of 'otherness' is supplemented by an examination of the discursive context of the Self / Other interaction. Such a discursive context includes unrestricted forms of 'causal explanation'. Rather than explaining the cause-effect relationships of a social phenomenon in deterministic terms, the discursive 'causal explanation' enables us to understand why and how specific discourses emerged while others did not, or why a certain identity's claims were constructed, and how they came to prevail over others in certain historical contexts.¹⁷⁸

This is not to say that 'reality' cannot be accessed through the positivist methodology of falsification and validation, but rather that reality is always discursively and socially mediated.¹⁷⁹ By conceiving 'reality' as discursively and socially produced, discursive approaches open the ground to innovative research inquiries – which rationalism has overlooked – such as the interpretations and the social meaning of political phenomena.

The discursive and social nature of 'reality' has implications also with regard to the relation between identity and policy. As demonstrated in Chapter 1, identity and policy¹⁸⁰ are linked within a political discourse. Foreign policies are discursively presented as caused by a representation or the effect of a specific identity.¹⁸¹ However, given the unstable nature of identities – which are (re)produced – identities and policies become ontologically inseparable only if this inseparability is sanctioned within a specific discourse which is, in turn, never fully stable. By contrast, for rationalism – and partially for conventional constructivism – causal epistemology is the crucial tool through which understanding can be gained. Yet, the rationalist causal epistemology fails to consider that 'truth' is generated through the historical reiteration of knowledge within a specific discourse, rather than in an extra-historical, extra-discursive objectivity.

¹⁷⁸ D., Howarth, in Scarbrough, Tanenbaum, *Research strategies in the social sciences*, p.282

¹⁷⁹ J., Lye, *Some Post-Structural Assumption*. Department of English Language & Literature, 1996-1997. Available from: <http://www.brocku.ca/english/courses/4F70/poststruct.php> Accessed 1/06/2013

¹⁸⁰ Given that a 'policy' is an expression of a specific interest, the two terms interest are here used interchangeably

¹⁸¹ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, p. 23

1.2 Language, Discourse and Identity

Having rejected the positivist methodology based on the cause-effect principle to explain social phenomena, this section will examine the main concepts that a discourse theory generally relies on: language, discourse and their relations with identity.

Language is a key source in the proposed methodology. It constitutes material objects and social practices as meaningful¹⁸², thus making materiality intelligible. Given that each statement involves an understanding of the language system and given the impossibility of objectively accessing and understanding thoughts and intentions, public texts, speeches and conveyed actions (e.g. symbols) are instead accessible through language.¹⁸³ Language represents the medium that enables us to investigate the articulation and the performance of identities and its claims within a discursive structure. Meaning is produced as a result of such a linguistic articulation and performance.¹⁸⁴ Subjects produce meaning through language. In other words, within the discursive context, language has a performative and productive function that enables subjects to manifest their claims to identity. Overall, the focus on language is important because it helps us to understand subjects' identity claims, which ultimately become constitutive of subjects' interests. Thus, the latter turn out to be constructed rather than pre-given, as argued in rationalist accounts. On the practical level, discourse (see below) represents the basis on which the policy interests of a political actor are justified. As such, interests are then discursively reflected in policies. Rather than deriving interests and policies from an anonymous structure – as rationalists do – the way to discover an actor's interests is through language (written text, speeches, signs).

As noted, discourse analysts also tend to classify symbolic actions (non-linguistic elements) as belonging to language. This perspective draws from the linguistic school initiated by Saussure who conceived of 'signs' as lying at the core of discourse. For

¹⁸² C., Barker, D., Galasinski, *Cultural Studies and Discourse Analysis: A Dialogue on Language and Identity*, London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2001, p. 4

¹⁸³ J., Ruiz Ruiz, Sociological Discourse Analysis: Methods and Logic, *Qualitative Social Research*, Vol.10, No. 2., 2009. Available from <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1298/2882#gcit> Accessed 27/05/2013

¹⁸⁴ S., Baffour Adjei, Discourse Analysis: Examining Language Use in Context, *The Qualitative Report*, Vol.18, Art. 50, 2013, p. 1

Saussure ‘signs’ derive from the relationship between a signifier (sound or written mark) and a signified (concepts). These two concepts – signifier and signified – do not produce sense only through their reference to entities in an independent and objective world. Instead, they produce meaning through reference to each other. As such, language is a system of signs, each of which acquires significance only in relation to another signs and only through the broader context within which it is included.¹⁸⁵ There is no given signified prior to its relationship to a signifier. Meaning is thus a social convention originating from signifying practices that structure the relation between signs.¹⁸⁶

Other theorists such as Roland Barthes have defined semiology as the science of signs. He applied a structuralist account of language to practices of popular cultural models (e.g. films, food systems) in order to discover the structure of the signs in these models. He thought that communication in each model was organised into coded systems, which followed rules primarily established in the field of linguistics.¹⁸⁷ Semiological analysis involves finding this structure, which is not to be seen as a single bloc but includes different levels of meaning. The aim is to find the last layer – or ‘the first order language’ – on which all the other layers rely. Similarly to Wæver, Barthes conceived a layered structure of meaning to demonstrate that there is no single ‘first order language’ through which we have direct access to reality.¹⁸⁸ Rather, second-order signifying systems are erected on first-order signifying systems, which are socially constructed and ‘sedimented’.

Although identity expresses itself through language, this is not enough. Its construction also involves relationships with other identities. Language also needs to be complemented with another very strategic terminology: discourse. If we focus only on language, there is the risk that whatever an individual may state will constitute

¹⁸⁵ Barker and Galasinski, *Cultural Studies and Discourse Analysis: A Dialogue on Language and Identity*, p. 2

For example the concept of ‘victory’ only has meaning in relation to ‘loss’.

¹⁸⁶ Barker and Galasinski, *Cultural Studies and Discourse Analysis: A Dialogue on Language and Identity*, p. 4

¹⁸⁷ B., Nichols, *Movies and Methods: An Anthology. Volume II*, London: University of California Press Ltd, 1985, p.478

By detecting these rules defining a structure of sign, he could explain all possible conditions of ‘eating’, that is, the different ways people eat in Japan and Europe.

¹⁸⁸ B., Eilam, and M., Ben-Peretz, *Teaching, Learning, and Visual Literacy: The Dual Role of Visual Representation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, p.130

discourse. A discourse not only relies on the language but it also relates to a specific historical and socio-cultural context, which contributes to set the boundaries within which the language can be used. Language is, in fact, meaningful only within the limits of a given discursive structure. It follows that, in order for language to be meaningful, it is necessary to analyse that discursive structure from a historical perspective. This will enable us to understand how a specific language has progressively acquired meaning. Yet, as no discursive structure can be fully closed, the challenge is how to identify a discourse. Foucault resolves this pitfall by tying together the concepts of ‘statement’ (minor element), ‘discourse’ (group of formulated statements) and ‘discursive formation’ (which refers to the regularity in the dispersion of statements). As such, a discourse is a signifying practice in which the statements belonging to it have a regular and dispersed relationship.¹⁸⁹ The discursive formation is not detected by reference to a common object of investigation or a common theme. Rather, it is the continued interplay of the rules of a discourse produced throughout history that explains the unity of discourse itself.¹⁹⁰

Yet, ‘regularity in dispersion’ does not tell us where one signifying practice terminates and another begins, since there is no means of deriving regularity. To address this weakness, it is necessary to postulate that the limits of a discourse are to be found within the discourse itself by exploring how, in a particular discourse, the boundaries are drawn. Therefore, the task of discourse analysis is to create a discourse and draw its boundaries on the basis of the textual analysis conducted and the sources available. In other words, unity within discourses is reached when a unified meaning is historically reiterated. Through such a process, it becomes a narrative with specific rules. Thus, a discourse analyst also examines how, in a given historical circumstance, various components of a discourse are unified in a narrative.¹⁹¹ The historical root of each discourse paves the way to clarify the distinction between the various ‘degrees of sedimentation’ of a discourse.

¹⁸⁹ N. A., Andersen, *Discursive Analytical Strategies: Understanding Foucault, Koselleck, Laclau, Luhmann*, Bristol: The Policy Press, 2003, p. 8

¹⁹⁰ R., Nola, *Foucault*, Ilford: Routledge, 1998, p.134

¹⁹¹ Sayyid, Zac, in Scarbrough, Tanenbaum, *Research strategies in the social sciences*, p.260

1.3 Degree of Discursive ‘Sedimentation’: Narrative/Story, Paradigm and Discursive Practices

In social science discourse is increasingly used as an umbrella term. Generally speaking, discourses are tools through which individuals permeate reality with meaning. They can unfold in a variety of forms such as language (public text and speeches) or symbolic signs. However, in the context of this thesis, discourses are ‘sedimented’.¹⁹² As suggested in the previous chapter, the focus on the ‘degree of sedimentation’ is key in the context of Wæver’s three-layered structure. This research identifies three levels of sedimentation: narrative/story, paradigm and discursive practices. Narrative/story refers to a historical interpretation of an ‘event’ or core concept. This narrative interpretation relies on a specific understanding of how the historical event or core concept was generated. Therefore, a narrative represents the basic level of cognitive understanding and offers a broader explanatory and historical structure to frame contemporary policy debates. From this perspective, layer one of Wæver’s structure aims to explore the basic historical representations and narratives that actors have used to describe their mutual relationship.

As such, a narrative / story constitutes the deeper bedrock upon which further levels of sedimentation are built. A paradigm represents the next level of sedimentation of a discourse. A paradigm is a set of beliefs and views that represent a frame of reference used to organise reasoning regarding a policy field. When operating at level of paradigms, the concept of ‘difference’ becomes gradually more clear because the distinction of views and actions of others who operate within a different paradigm emerges more clearly. From this perspective, paradigms help to problematise the ‘difference’ as well as the changes in views. By analysing the role of paradigms in natural sciences, Kuhn¹⁹³ studied the tendency of one paradigm to become ‘sedimented’ and resilient to significant change. Yet, he adds, as soon as the weaknesses of that paradigm became manifest, a new paradigm emerges and replaces the old one.¹⁹⁴ By facilitating the identification of changes in views, paradigms also help to reject their ‘taken for granted’ character. Rather, they are one possible point of view among

¹⁹² Ruiz Ruiz, *Qualitative Social Research*

¹⁹³ T., Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970

¹⁹⁴ For example the idea that the sun revolves around the earth was replaced by the idea that the earth revolves around the sun.

many.¹⁹⁵

A paradigm is performed through discursive practices. These practices refer to codified linguistic usages or symbolic acts which enable a given policy paradigm to acquire meaning. In practical terms, the paradigm represents written and spoken texts and symbolic actions produced by political actors or policy-makers in their activities. The focus on textual / symbolic analysis enables the researcher to study the actual documents and actions. However, examining these discursive practices alone is a mere end in itself. These practices make sense only when contextualised in the broader framework that takes into account historical narratives (layer one) and policy paradigms (layer two).

For example, the historically ingrained narrative of Westphalian sovereignty was at the basis of political community (layer one). Such a narrative can support various political paradigms (layer two) about the ideal nature of that political community – e.g. democracy, monarchy, communist, etc. Consequently, the principles regulating the life of a specific political community – say democracy – are established and performed in a constitution (layer three). It emerges that the contextual (layers one and two) and textual (layer three) levels are in continuous dialogue and they finally aim to generate interpretation. Thus, these three levels are not separate moments of analysis. Rather, each new event pertaining to the issue under examination (e.g. launch of a new framework policy within EU-Russia energy relations), should be examined in terms of a backwards and forwards interaction between the three levels.¹⁹⁶

1.4 Identity

Within discourse theory identities are understood as relational. The construction of categories involves their insertion into a discursive system of similarities and differences. In fact, the identity of the Self originates from its position in relation to the Other and its characteristics as represented through a signifying system. The Self has multiple positions and roles depending on the social context it relates to. For example, the Self can be described as democratic and catholic. These multiple Selves are possible

¹⁹⁵ Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research*, USA: Cengage Learning, 2013, pp. 32-33

¹⁹⁶ Ruiz Ruiz, *Qualitative Social Research*

because each social context in which the Self interacts puts forward a meaningful description of the Self that can be added to other existing descriptions.¹⁹⁷

Although the Self can acquire multiple identities, there is always a distance between the acquired identity and its subject. Similarly to discourse, this distance generates the impossibility of constituting a complete identity. It follows that the subject does not completely fit within the space of its identity because instability and change are constitutive elements of any identity.¹⁹⁸ Having said this, it is important to understand the process through which an identity is ‘acquired’, and how it can change. Derrida holds that identity is always unstable and contingent. The acquisition of identity implies a process of self-understanding and identification. Identification, in turn, involves a process of exchange between an ‘inside’ and an ‘outside’ and this locates identities within a certain context.¹⁹⁹ However, this does not create a full and fixed identity. The identity of the subject can change through a new act of identification (e.g. dislocation, see below) and through its adherence to a new project (e.g. Russia’s identification moved from its self-identification with Yeltsin’s project to a self-identification with Putin’s project). The scope of the change depends on the relative success of that project in becoming hegemonic. The more limited the space available for identification outside the hegemonic discourse is, the smaller the possibility there is for a change. As such, the examination of the way in which the limits of discourse are historically constructed makes it possible to observe how subjectivity itself is constructed. Consequently, it is relevant to consider how the Self is constructed within a discourse, how it acquires and establishes its position and how it relates to and differentiates from ‘otherness’. Besides claiming the relational foundation of identity, Laclau and Mouffe also assert that identity is constructed through unstable differences. The constant comparison with the Other implies that the construction of the Self passes through a confrontation with a system of difference that can never be eradicated.²⁰⁰ The Self’s confrontation with the system of difference embodied by the Other results in a political contestation of discourses. This political contestation between the Self and the Other is ultimately a

¹⁹⁷ For example the Self can be described at the same time as student, man, Russian.

¹⁹⁸ E. Laclau, and L., Zac, Minding the Gap: The Subject of Politics, in Laclau, E., eds., *The Making of Political Identities*, London: Verso, 1994, p.35

¹⁹⁹ S., Newman, Derrida’s Deconstruction of Authority, *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, Vol.27, No.3, 2001. Available from: <http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/saul-newman-derrida-s-deconstruction-of-authority> Accessed 10/10/2013

²⁰⁰ R., Friedland, J., Mohr, *Matters of Culture: Cultural Sociology in Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 25-26

contestation for power and hegemony and stems from the awareness that the Self and its discourses are vulnerable and incomplete. It is around these processes that, drawing from a Gramscian position, Laclau and Mouffe affirm the centrality of political contestation between identities.²⁰¹

Laclau and Mouffe complement the theory of discourse by introducing three further notions: dislocation, hegemony and antagonism.²⁰²

As noted, the processes of subject positioning and identification within a discursive structure are not fixed and ‘any concrete individual’ can acquire multiple subject positions.²⁰³ From this perspective, the concepts of identification and positioning involve the possibility of dislocation, which refers to the process by which the subject adheres to another political project. In fact, as a reaction to the unstable nature of the social and political world, an identity can dislocate itself. The subject is forced to take decisions – that is to identify with other political projects and discourses – each time that a social identity is in crisis and a new structure needs to be generated. It is in the process of identification that, for Laclau and Mouffe, political subjectivities are formed or reshaped. Dislocation, hence, means that the subject is not determined by an a priori structure.²⁰⁴

Overall, the fact that the unity of identity and its discourses are incomplete is due to the presence of a counter-identity and counter-discourse that poses a continued ‘threat’. This circumstance opens the ground for a hegemonic contestation about how to overcome the continued dislocation of self-identity and its discourse. The presence of conflict and counter-practices marks the concept of the ‘primacy of politics’, which ultimately represents the arena where contestation for hegemony over competing discourses and identity takes place.²⁰⁵

Hegemony refers to the dominance of a political project in its contestation with

²⁰¹ Laclau, Mouffe, *Hegemony and socialist strategy: Towards a radical democratic politics*, p.71

²⁰² K., Dowding, eds., *Encyclopedia of Power*, London: SAGE Publications, 2011, pp. 194-195

²⁰³ D., Howarth, and Y., Stavrakakis, Introducing Discourse Theory and Political Analysis, in D., Howarth, A.J., Norval, and Y., Stavrakakis, eds., *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis: Identities, Hegemonies and Social Change*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000, pp.12-13

A subject might identify himself as ‘white’, ‘man’, ‘Buddhist’.

²⁰⁴ Dowding, *Encyclopedia of Power*, p. 370

²⁰⁵ Howarth, in Scarbrough, Tanenbaum, *Research strategies in the social sciences*, pp. 274-280

competing discourses. The hegemony of a discourse is measured through its ability to secure meaning within a specific context. According to Sayyid and Zac, two conditions have to occur in order to consider a project as hegemonic. Firstly, when a discourse turns its political project and rules into the ‘natural’ rules of a group and its limits become the ‘natural’ limits of the group. Secondly, when it dismisses the other projects against which it was competing, although the latter do not dissolve. Yet, the hegemonic discourse has also some degree of instability. Thus, to maintain its hegemony, the dominant discourse has to establish and reiterate rules to oppose the constant challenge from competing projects attempting to destabilize the rules and limits of the hegemonic discourse.²⁰⁶

Overall, in a context of volatility of political borders, the hegemonic practice always faces the presence of antagonistic forces. This explains the impossibility of fixing meaning and the continued possibility of competing political projects. It follows that all the social practices that constitute new meaning and identities are conceptualized as partially internal and partially external to the discourses that define them.²⁰⁷

As previously stated, the conception of hegemony includes the concept of competition between discourses and, thus, social antagonism. Antagonism does not derive from a ‘real opposition’ of a priori objects, but it is a part of identity construction. Furthermore, it introduces the element of confrontation into the encounter of identities and their claims, and it confirms the relational essence of identity. Drawing from Derrida’s notion of the ‘constitutive outside’, Laclau and Mouffe contend that antagonism takes place when the presence of the Other prevents the Self from being totally it-Self causing, as a consequence, the unfeasibility of Self-formation. This impossibility derives from the mutual experience of both the antagonising entity and the entity being antagonised. The secondary effect of social antagonism is that it contributes to unifying the hegemonic discourse by establishing a threatening outside that prevents the closure of the discourse.²⁰⁸ As previously noted, the task of a discursive methodology is to explore the mechanism by which actors construct the blockage of identity in antagonistic terms. The concept of antagonism supports Laclau and Mouffe’s thesis that identity formation is

²⁰⁶ Sayyid and Zac, in Scarbrough, Tanenbaum, *Research strategies in the social sciences*, p.262

²⁰⁷ Laclau, and Mouffe, *Hegemony and socialist strategy: Towards a radical democratic politics*, pp. x-

xii

²⁰⁸ Dowding, *Encyclopedia of Power*, p. 196

not the result of an anonymous structure or the self-interested action of rational actors, but is a political and historical process subject to the negative outside that determines a constant redefinition. To explain how antagonisms are discursively constituted, it is important to stress the importance of a ‘negative outside’ and the process through which a Self’s discursive system relates to and differentiates from it.²⁰⁹

In general, discourse analysis has been the object of a number of critics underlining the excessive and fundamental volatility and lack of objectivity of this approach. Thus, the next section aims to explore the main limits of discourse analysis and proposes solutions to close the gaps identified.

2 Limits and Weaknesses of Discourse Theory

Discourse analysis is a generic term including a heterogeneous variety of theoretical approaches and analytical constructs. It mainly stem from linguistics, psychology, ethnography and post-structural social theory.

Each of these fields applies its own assumptions and methods. These various approaches differ in many ways such as, in their conceptions of discourse, in the role they assign to agency and subjectivity; in the way they recognize texts and contexts.

Discourse analysis is a qualitative method of studying texts, which aims to investigate the connections between language, communication, knowledge, power and social practices.

As explained, discourse is a form of language; therefore linguistic methods of analysis have been dominant in the study of texts and speeches. Linguistic methods focus on how discourse are structured or how sentences are connected. Subfields of linguistic – such as phonology, morphology, and syntax – have emerged to study sound structures, word formation, and the formal structures of sentences. Similarly, semantics was developed to explain the meaning of linguistic expressions through interpretation.

Rhetoric instead proposes to study discourses beyond its linguistic and grammatical rules. Discourses are, thus, considered as a form of social interaction, which occurs within a communicative pattern. In particular, rethoric suggests that discourses have a persuasive communicative function, that is performed through a structure made of

²⁰⁹ S., Critchley, O., Marchart, (eds), *Laclau, A Critical Reader*, New York: Routledge, 2004, pp. 4-5

figure of sounds, style, syntactic structure or meaning²¹⁰.

The discourse historical approach argues that objective social structures alone - such as gender or ethnicity - cannot satisfactory account for language variation and discourse construction. Rather the interaction between social and discursive structures is mediated by the cognitive context. Discourse historical approach explores the interplay between social structures and individual actors, by introducing subjectivity and agency. Furthermore, while the construction of discourse depends on the context and its linguistic practices, discourse historical approach also underlines the importance of memory and history into this construction. From this perspective, discourses include both a structured form of knowledge and the memory of social practice.²¹¹

Another method is the discursive psychology, which considers inner mental processes of an individual as constituted through discursive practice. This implies that psychological language follows external, not internal, criteria, and as a result, phenomena such as emotions are socially constructed. Thus, according to discursive psychology, in order to understand emotions, psychologists should examine the action of the individual who claims that feeling. A consequence of focusing on external criteria for inner states is that individuals lose their privileged position.

This research adopts a critical discursive approach, which focuses primarily on political issues in the belief that power relations are discursive. Rather than merely describe discourse structures, such a approach aims to investigate their social nature, that is, to examine the ways discourse structures enact, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge the control of public discourse.²¹²

Despite the variety of approaches, it is also important to note that there are a number of limitations generally concerning discourse theory as such and critical discursive approach in particular. Generally speaking, a methodology employing discourse theory does not capture the subjects through its discourses, it cannot reveal the inner thoughts

²¹⁰ T.A. van Dijk, Introduction: Levels and dimensions of discourse analysis, in: T.A.vzn Dijk, (eds.), *Handbook of discourse analysis*, London: Academic Press London, 1985, 1-11

²¹¹ J.Glynos, D. Howart, A. Norval, E. Speed, *Discourse analysis: Varieties and Methods*, National Centre for Research, August 2009, pp.17-25

²¹² T.A. van Dijk, Critical discourse analysis, in D. Tannen, D. Schiffrin, H. Hamilton, (eds.), *Handbook of discourse analysis*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2001, pp.352-371

of an actor, nor can it resolve the distance that exists between the analyst and the object of study. Rather, discourse theory enables the researcher to interpret how an identity's claims unfold in the historical narratives (layer one), policy paradigms (layer two) and discursive practices (layer three) that construct a specific debate. This, in turn, helps us to understand current debates. Therefore, the objective of the researcher is to study how these three layers are constructed in a given debate.²¹³

Against this background, one of the main weaknesses of the discourse approach relates to the fact that meaning of each discourse played in a given debate is never fixed and thus everything can be re-interpreted. This can be very challenging, as any analysis can be contested and each new interpretation gives rise to a further critique.²¹⁴ As a result, there is indeed a 'non-rule' perspective, according to which general and universal rules are inapplicable, rather rules governing a discourse should be articulated and detected in the research process. From this perspective, the researcher cannot rely on pre-existing discourses and fixed theoretical structures for the empirical cases they are investigating. It follows what Derrida called the impossibility of the 'singularity of each reading'. For Derrida, each attempt to investigate the singularity of the construction of the text is doomed to fail as each text has been previously altered by another consciousness.²¹⁵

Like Derrida, Laclau believes that each empirical research articulates a specific concept. In Foucault's reading, each genealogy represents a specific 'history of the present', built around specific concerns, which leads to an investigation into how they became an issue. The condition necessary for this approach is that the concepts have to enjoy an appropriate degree of 'openness', 'deformation', and 'transformation'.²¹⁶ This can also imply that discourse analysis provides greater flexibility allowing multiple views on issues. However, while multiple views may be possible, some will surely be recognized as being more valid than others while 'truth' will always be elusive.

Against this background, Hansen raises further methodological issues regarding the

²¹³ Sayyid, and Zac, in Scarbrough, Tanenbaum *Research strategies in the social sciences*, pp. 265-266

²¹⁴ A., Morgan, Discourse Analysis: An Overview for the Neophyte Researcher, *Journal of Health and Social Care Improvement*, May Issue, 2010, p.4

²¹⁵ R.T.S., Pada, The Paradox of Ipseity and Difference: Derrida's Deconstruction and Logocentrism, *Kritike*, Vol.1, No.1, June 2007, p. 32

²¹⁶ Howarth, in Scarbrough, Tanenbaum, *Research strategies in the social sciences*, p. 288

reliability of discourse analysis: would another researcher come to the same result if selecting the same texts? Is it possible to declare some discourse analyses better than others? This triggers another critique according to which discourse analysis runs the risk that ‘anything goes’.²¹⁷ However, a response to this critique would be that the focus on the discursive articulations of signs and identities implies that the researcher has to pay particular attention to how signs are linked and differentiated (see below) and how they construct Selves and Others. It follows that if relevant signs are neglected, if the ‘degree of otherness’ between Self and Other is overstated or minimized, if the connection between identity and policy is not recognised, the connection between linked and differentiated signs becomes artificial and the overall research turns out to be a vulnerable reading.²¹⁸

In general, as Sayyid and Zac noted, the critiques of discourse theory attempt to find foundations and objectivity, and downplay the ‘primacy of politics’ and language. As such, these critiques appeal to materiality when asserting the ‘facticity’ of material objects or when demonstrating that the foundations lie in the intrinsic properties of objects. The intention is to uncover the ‘reality’ underlying the language and to find in the ‘hardness of stone’ something which is exempt from discursive practices. Such a search for materiality as a way of locating foundations is, however, based on a misinterpretation of the discourse approach. Discourse theorists do not hold that objects are created simply through the pronunciation of the world that identifies them. Language does not create objects. Rather, the main assumption is that the material world is reachable through the description made by language and descriptions are, in turn, situated in some signifying practice.²¹⁹ In other words, reality is socially constructed through the description of the world. These descriptions are subject to changes, and when a description changes, our understanding of ‘reality’ is affected. For example, as Sayyid and Zac report, science believed that the universe was made of atoms and that atoms were the smallest components on Earth. As science developed, we learnt that the universe is also made of subatomic particles. The universe has not changed; but our description of it has. This leaves the possibility that in the future, our descriptions might change again.

²¹⁷ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, p.45

²¹⁸ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, p.45

²¹⁹ Sayyid, Zac, in Scarbrough, Tanenbaum, *Research strategies in the social sciences*, p. 254

Overall, although an extra-linguistic element is present, the change of a description is also a social process as it is mediated through language.²²⁰

Furthermore, against the critique of excessive volatility, it can be said that discourse analysts examine political phenomena by putting attention on the limits of discursive and narrative formations, and, at the same time creating, and tracing the logics that structure competing narratives and discourses. Their principles are drawn from various fields: linguistics (sign, signifier, signified), psychoanalysis (subjectivity, identification, repression), philosophy (deconstruction), political science and political theory (hegemony and power).²²¹ In methodological terms, discourse theory enables analysts to study political phenomena by creating drawing and disentangling. The focus is on the way in which groups construct their interests; their relationship with the Other; the narratives through which they tell their past and future as well as their self-understanding. In the study of foreign policy where lots of information is unknown, discourse analysis offers a big methodological advantage as it relies on public texts, speeches and symbolic signs. If the researcher frames his analysis within the discursive structure he creates, then the logic of argumentation emerges more comprehensibly.²²²

3 Methodological Techniques and Decisions

3.1 How to Study Texts

The previous sections discussed the main tools of discourse analysis – classified as a reflectivist methodology – with a view to illustrating its advantages vis a vis rationalist / positivist methodology. This section aims to provide guidelines on ‘how’ to practically study the discursive methodology and build a research design. The methodological focus on discourses as articulated in written and spoken texts raises a number of questions regarding how identities are detected and defined within foreign policy texts and how the relationship between competing discourses should be studied.

²²⁰ Sayyid, Zac, in Scarbrough, Tanenbaum, *Research strategies in the social sciences*, p. 255

²²¹ Sayyid, Zac, in Scarbrough, Tanenbaum, *Research strategies in the social sciences*, pp. 260-261

²²² Wæver, in Hansen, Wæver, *European Integration and National Identity*, p. 26

In addition, further questions are raised regarding the criteria used to select a body of material and data as well as the types of text that should be chosen. The second section of this chapter aims to clarify these points.

A discourse analyst is expected to come across a variety of texts. Depending on the issue, each text refers to a specific discursive structure. Such a reference is often implicit, and thus the analyst needs to discern the codes that link the text together with its discursive structure; make differentiations; and locate it spatially, temporally and ethically. As a result, the meaning of a text is rarely self-evident but it is often drawn from a discursive structure.²²³ According to Kristeva, the text is not an individual, isolated object but a set of cultural textuality. Kristeva believes that the individual text and the cultural text are made from a shared textual space and cannot be separated from each other.²²⁴ This process of inter-textuality highlights the fact that texts are posed against other texts and they draw upon each other in shaping identities and policies. Texts also establish authority by citing other texts and, eventually, reinterpreting the past. The inter-textual link generates mutual legitimacy and can also contribute to the creation and reinforcement of meaning and narratives. In general, inter-textuality facilitates the gathering of facts and knowledge, and helps the analyst situate them within specific foreign policy debates.²²⁵ This will ultimately help create a discourse.

Having said that in this research textual material is the basic source to construct the various levels of ‘sedimentation’ of a discourse (narratives / stories, paradigms and discursive practices), it is now necessary to understand how to study the content of a discourse. In this light, two research techniques are briefly outlined here: genealogy and deconstruction. They mainly stem from the works of Foucault and Derrida. Inspired by Nietzsche, Foucault elaborated a genealogical approach, in which the investigative strategy aims to explore the historical emergence – or the narrative character – of the rules and practice of a contemporary discourse. For Foucault, genealogy studies the historical accidents and contingencies that originated (or dissolved) a representation, as

²²³ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, pp.55-56

²²⁴ J., Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1980, quoted by V. M., Simandan, *Julia Kristeva's Concepts of Intertextuality*, Voicu Mihnea Simandan, 2010, Available from: <http://www.simandan.com/?p=2067> Accessed 1/06/2013

²²⁵ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, p.57

well as the conditions determining the marginalization of other representations.²²⁶ From this perspective, this thesis draws from Foucault's insight, as one of the main objectives is to explore the genealogy (layer one) of contemporary energy discourses and discursive practices played in EU-Russia energy relations (layer two and three).

If Foucault examined the rules and conditions of historical representations, Derrida focuses on how these representations unfold. His technique of deconstruction emphasizes the practice of reading, which considers written text as 'object'. Derrida believes that the meaning emerging from a text is not fixed but it is subject to re-interpretation, which, in turn, opens the possibility to produce new meaning from the same text.²²⁷ Derrida's concept of 'double reading' aims to reorganize a text while demonstrating its limits through the identification of the impossible 'points of closure' in a text. The deconstructive stance also implies that texts are constituted around opposition – what Derrida calls 'the metaphysics of presence' – and the repression of others. Derrida's 'double reading' aims to re-define these oppositions, while articulating new conceptual 'infrastructures', which allocate the oppositions in different ways. The 'method' of deconstruction is useful for discourse theorists as it implies a deconstructive practice that opens up the ground closed by dominant interpretations.²²⁸

3.2 How to Study Identity

Textual analysis also accounts for identity construction. In particular, the discourse analyst should investigate how, in a set of texts, the claims of a Self-identity are linked with (similar) or different (antithetical) claims compared to those of the Other. In the specific field of foreign policy discourse, the focus is on how identity claims are imbued with political content. Such content emerges from locating identity spatially, temporally and ethically. Each of these steps is further elaborated below. Understanding identity as produced through the process of 'linking and differentiation' implies the existence of an

²²⁶ G., Aylesworth, *Postmodernism*, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Summer 2013. Available from: <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2013/entries/postmodernism/> Accessed 2/06/2013

²²⁷ Philosopher, *Post-Structuralism*. Available from: <http://www.philosopher.org.uk/poststr.htm> Accessed 1/06/2013

²²⁸ Howarth, in Scarbrough, Tanenbaum, *Research strategies in the social sciences*, pp.287-288

Other towards which the Self can be linked and differentiated.

Methodologically, the first step would focus on detecting those terms in the text that indicate a clear articulation of the Other as opposed to the Self. Identity construction, in fact, does not stem from a mere attribution of a specific sign to the Other or to the Self. Rather, it emerges through the positioning of the sign within a broader system. In this respect, the twofold process of linking and differentiation explains how meaning and identity are constructed through a series of linked signs that represent relations of sameness as well as through another series of juxtaposed signs that constitute relations of difference. This ultimately contributes to measuring and constructing the 'degree of Otherness'. For example, the construction of 'Russia' as different from 'Western Europe' does not generate much meaning if this construction is not located within a discourse that links and differentiates these signs. A discursive option, for example, is to link 'Russia' to concepts of 'modernity', lack of democracy and 'underdevelopment' and pose it in opposition to a 'postmodern', 'democratic', 'developed' and 'civilized' Western Europe. In this light, the construction of identity should be conducted taking into account signs articulated by a particular discourse or text, how a specific text associates signs to achieve the discursive stability of the Self, where instabilities and gaps between these constructions lie, and how the competing discourses of the Other construct the same sign differently.²²⁹

However, it is necessary to stress that, although identity is relational and the Self is constructed through differentiation against an Other, it is unlikely that all texts reiterate always the same juxtaposition of a Self and an Other. In fact, a particular discourse might be so well established that the texts no longer need to detail a construction of the same identity.

In addition, the investigation of the identity's articulation poses also the issue of 'discourses disappearance', that is, identities articulated at one time might have lost their significance, and, as a consequence this discourse is no longer recognized. In short, the processes of linking and differentiation provide a theoretical ground to understand how the discourses of the Self aim to construct stability, how they become unstable, how they can be deconstructed and the process through which they transform

²²⁹ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, pp. 41-42

or become irrelevant. However, as the meaning of each sign is created through linking and differentiation, there is always a gap arising from the fact that signs are linked to each other, but never fully the same.²³⁰

Furthermore, when adopting an identity-based account to study foreign policy, it is important to assign a political character to the identity, which leads to the necessity to explore the spatial, temporal and ethical dimensions of the identity. There is not one dimension, which can be said to determine the other two. Rather, they are complementary.

Spatiality focuses on the way boundaries are drawn. To understand identity as spatially produced it is necessary to underline that the identity formation process involves the construction of boundaries and the demarcation of space. The measure through which the demarcation is made depends on the concepts of sovereignty and security and their relation with other spatial identities. To give an example, if a spatial construction of identity is based on the concept of a 'sovereign nation state' (e.g. Russia), this implies an egalitarian relation with other sovereign nation states based on the mutual respect of spatial / geographical borders.²³¹

Identity, however, emerges not only around spatiality but also through its temporal articulations. The identification of a temporal identity relies on temporal schemes such as 'development', 'change', or 'stasis'. The employment of these schemes implies, in turn, a central role for history and Other. In fact, the temporality of a contemporary identity is based on how Self's historical identity has developed in comparison with Other.

The third dimension relates to the investigation of the ethical identity. This focuses on the construction of responsibility and the sense of mission that actors deploy in their foreign policy discourses. The articulation of ethical identity looks at the discursive construction of ethics, morality, and responsibility. For example, the moral representation of wars can be framed within the scheme of 'genocide' or that of 'humanitarian intervention'.

Focusing on the way in which these three dimensions of identity construction are

²³⁰ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, pp. 44-45

²³¹ In the foreign policy domain, this spatial identity is complemented by representations involving a more complex set of spatial and territorial concepts such as 'Europe', 'the Orient', 'Eurasia' and a political content or subjectivity (such as 'barbarians' or 'civilization'). As such, spatial identities are often constructed as a mixture of territoriality, history, and abstract political content.

connected sheds light on how political subjectivities are constituted as well as on the possibility for analysing differences between discourses and how they change over time. By combining a discursive approach on the one hand, with the study of identity through the three dimensions of identity construction on the other hand, it is possible to grasp the type of Selves and Others constituted in foreign policy discourse and how radical the difference between them is ('degree of Otherness'). It follows that, rather than only recognising two constructions of identity as 'different', this approach also allows for a focus on how this difference is spatially, temporally and ethically situated. This should be considered as one of the main strengths of a discursive approach.²³²

Turning to the practical adaptation of discourse analysis to the specific study of EU-Russia energy relations, a series of decisions need to be made. Following Hansen's approach, for a research design to be built, it is important to determine whether one should examine the foreign policy discourse of one Self or of multiple Selves and, whether one should select one particular moment or a longer historical development. On the basis of the decisions made, it will then be possible to select the textual material (primary and secondary sources).

3.3. Step 1: Number of Selves, Discourse Encounter and Temporality

This research studies the articulation of a foreign policy issue across a series of historical Selves and Others. In addition, it opposes the discourse of the Self with the competing discourse of the Other, bearing in mind that the Self is constituted through the relation with the Other who, in turn, can be articulated as a 'superior', 'inferior', 'threat', 'partner', 'learner' or 'in need of assistance'.

Studying the discourse of both Self and Other through the discourse encounter mechanism helps us to understand how the discourse of the Self might be received by the Other. Discursive encounters trigger constructions of inferiority and superiority and thus produce a specific distribution of discursive and political power. For example, from a Western European perspective, the encounter between the EU and Russia is not always set in the terms of a dialogue between two equally powerful parties. Rather, the EU has often posed itself in a privileged position vis a vis the 'Russian learner'. This

²³² Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, pp. 46-51

explains, for example, why the EU has sought to transfer its energy legislation to Russia aiming to constitute the discursive structure to which Russia has to respond.²³³

For example, as Morozov outlines, in the discursive encounter with the West, Russia has proven to respond to the Western discursive structure by acknowledging the universal significance of liberal democratic values. At the same time, Russia also tries to challenge the Western control over the term democracy by adding its own meaning through the emphasis on the principle of sovereignty²³⁴.

In this research the choice of a discursive encounter combined with a comparative Self-Other study is influenced by pragmatic questions of linguistic abilities²³⁵. In fact, in order to conduct a comprehensive discursive encounter, the researcher usually needs to know the language of the Self as well as the encountered Other. In addition, questions of access to material documenting the discourse of the Other need to be considered. This is why this research employs the process of discourse encounter as mainly interpreted from a Western perspective. In other words, the discourses of both EU (Western Europe) and Russia are gleaned from texts belonging to a Western political debate and available in English.

Another important decision regards the temporal perspective. In light of the methodological choices made, this research opts for the analysis of an event (e.g. EU-Russia relations) in two protracted historical periods. The first regards layer one and analyses – through discursive encounter – the historical trajectory of the relations between Western Europe and Russia as seen from a Western perspective. The historical analysis dates back to the eighteenth century in the case of Russia, and to the early contact with Muscovy in the case of Western Europe. The second historical period is analyzed in layer two and examines the energy paradigms implemented by the EU and Russia from the second half of the twentieth century up to recent developments. Academic writings will be the main basis through which these historical periods are

²³³ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, pp. 76-77

²³⁴ V., Morozov, Subaltern empire? Towards a postcolonial approach to Russian foreign policy, *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol.60, No.6, Nov.-Dec. 2013, p.18

²³⁵ The emphasis in discourse analysis on the importance of language means that language abilities are crucial. Translations might sometimes be useful to study original texts. However, language is not, as explained, only a linguistic capability, it is also a social epistemology encompassing the knowledge of specific codes and nuances. Therefore, it can happen that the same word can have a meaning in English and a different one in Russian.

studied. As such, the next section will elaborate on the criteria to define a genre and distinguish among the textual material object of this research.

3.4. Step 2: How to Define a Genre

For the purpose of this research, genres are classified on the basis of the authority and power of their authors. It follows that foreign policy texts drafted by state bodies belong to the main genres of official policy documents and are considered as primary sources, while media, journalism and academic writing are considered as non-official texts and thus, categorized as secondary sources. From a discursive perspective, the definition of the authority of a text, that of its author and, that of the discourse advanced in that text relies on knowledge.²³⁶ Given that knowledge is discursively constructed and subject to contestation, it needs ‘power’ in order to be dominant and have capability of mobilization within foreign policy debates. The degree of empowerment of genres’ authors determines the different authorities of the genres.²³⁷ For example, this means that DG Energy representatives are in general more empowered by their institutional position and responsibilities to constitute and shape knowledge, thus a policy document authored by them would carry a higher level of authority compared to journal articles. It is, therefore, the different authority of the genre that enables a distinction between primary (e.g. official documents) and secondary sources (e.g. non-official material). For the purpose of this research, official materials will be utilized mainly to investigate the contemporary energy paradigms of the EU and Russia (layer two) as well as in the analysis of the case studies presented in layer three. Conversely, for the historical chapter 3, the impossibility to study the position of the EU before its creation, makes it necessary to assume that Western Europe is the entity that, more than others, overlaps with and can historically be approximated to today’s EU. As a result of the impossibility to study the EU’s historical position through official texts, this thesis conceptualizes a discourse encounter between Western Europe and Russia. For this reasons, the mutual representation of the Western European interpretation of Russia will be derived from secondary sources.²³⁸

²³⁶ As such, knowledge is thus a much broader concept than that assigned by causal positivism.

²³⁷ On genres see Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, pp. 65-66

²³⁸ It is important to reiterate that the mutual representation of Western Europe and Russia throughout the centuries emerges from Western sources mainly available in English.

4. Mapping the EU-Russia Energy Debate: A Detailed Research Design

Each debate presents a variety of discourses available. However, not all the discourses are on the same level. In this respect, as noted in Chapter 1, this research employs the ‘layered structure’ elaborated by Ole Wæver that sets out the three levels on which various discourses are played out. Discourses are hierarchically linked to each other depending on their different level of depth. The metaphor of depth does not mean that deeper is truer.²³⁹ Rather, it confers a ‘taken for granted’ character and refers to the ‘degree of sedimentation’: the deeper structures are more ‘segmented’ and more difficult to change, but change is always in principle possible since all layers are socially constructed.²⁴⁰ This structural approach has a number of advantages. Firstly, it organizes discourses within a specific debate. It can be contended that every text provides an exclusive construction of identity and policy, and thus, a separate discourse. Yet, political debates are linked through repeated issues, and the researcher should select a smaller number of basic discourses around which the debate revolves.²⁴¹ Secondly, by creating a link between the various levels of analysis, the layered structure of meaning contributes to the consistency of a given political project, from its historical inception to its practical actuation. A third advantage of the layered structure is that by exposing both dominant and competing positions, it is possible to give an indication of where the debate is and how it can evolve. In this respect, the layered discursive structure explains changes within continuity, which addresses one of the main limits of discourse theory: the fact that discourses seem to jump from one order to another with different discursive rules. The emphasis on change and history provides a more complete understanding to contextualize a debate.²⁴²

In practical terms, the most basic layer of a discourse includes historical narratives and representations of Western Europe and Russia in their mutual relation. The second layer has the merit of specifying the paradigm in the specific policy field (e.g. energy). Layer

²³⁹ Wæver, in Hansen and Wæver, *European Integration and National Identity*, p. 31

²⁴⁰ Hansen, in Hansen and Wæver, *European Integration and National Identity*, p. 5

²⁴¹ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, p.38

²⁴² Wæver, in Hansen and Wæver, *European Integration and National Identity*, pp. 30-33

three switches the focus from theoretical investigation to actual policy analysis. It illustrates how actors have practically used paradigms in a consistent way with the broader narrative/story.

Wæver's structure should be seen as a pyramid in which the three layers are in continuous interaction. The first layer provides the grounds on which certain discourses/paradigms in layer two become meaningful. Layers one and two form the discursive context through which the discursive practices of layer three (e.g. policy documents, speeches and symbolic actions) acquire meaning. As such, each of the three layers relies on the meaning, which emerged from the previous one and sets the boundaries of the political contest. From this standpoint, any debate depends on basic and wider conceptual logic (layers one and two), which are reproduced and eventually modified in discursive practices (layer three). Across the three layers, it will emerge how, by contesting the Other's project, the Self constructs the Other and at the same time, reinforces its own project. In the section on research design (see below), this three-layered structure will be adapted to the case of EU-Russia energy relations.

4.1 Layer One: Historical Encounter, Mutual Representations and the Project of 'Europe' held by Western Europe/EU and Russia (Chapter 3)

Foreign policy debates are constituted through individual texts revolving around familiar themes, which, in turn, refer to a smaller number of discourses such as basic discourses. In the Wæverian layered structure of meaning, basic discourses represent the deepest level of 'sedimentation' (or meaning). They examine the historical relations between the Self and the Other; and the construction of the historical Other by stressing the degrees of difference. Methodologically, basic discourses are detected in the historical texts of an academic or intellectual debate. Yet, references to basic discourses do not occur systematically – especially if a long-lasting issue is examined – but are (re-) constructed.²⁴³

In light of this research, layer one detects the mutual narratives and representations of Western Europe/EU and Russia throughout history. In turn, this layer also identifies how these actors have constructed their political identity as a result of these mutual representations. Such a discursive encounter will demonstrate what the concept of

²⁴³ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, p. 46

‘Europe’ as a political space means to them. Practically, it leads to the following questions: how have Western Europe/EU and Russia represented themselves in relation to each other throughout history? And how have they built their respective identities on the basis of this mutual representation? What is their understanding of ‘Europe’ as a political project? To answer these questions, this layer includes the basic narratives, which are the most ‘sedimented’ and resilient to change. The analysis identifies that, as a result of the encounter with Russia, Western Europe relies on the following basic narratives and representations for its self-representation: ‘Europeanization’, ‘Civilian Empire’ and ‘Concert of Europe’. As a result, Russia is constructed as a ‘learner’, ‘threat’, or ‘equal partner’.

On the Russian side, the encounter with Western Europe produces the following basic self-narratives: ‘Russia as Sovereign State’, ‘Russia as exceptional nation’, and ‘Russia as student of the West’. As a result, Western Europe is constructed as the ‘intrusive West’, the ‘equal partner’ or the ‘model’. These historical narratives and basic representations are read considering the ‘degree of Otherness’ they express. The textual material used for identifying the historical discourse consists mainly of secondary sources. For this purpose, works such as ‘Russia and the Idea of Europe’²⁴⁴, and ‘Uses of the Other’²⁴⁵, by Iver B. Neumann are examples of secondary sources analyzing how Western European discourses across history contributed to the construction of the Western European Self and the Russian Other. Once basic narratives and representations are identified, it is possible to climb down to the lower layers and integrate them within the context of a more specific energy paradigm.

4.2 Layer Two: the paradigm of the EU and Russia on energy governance (Chapter 4)

The findings emerging from layer one serve as a basis to build layer two on EU’s and Russia’s energy paradigms. In particular, layer two explores how historical narratives and representations found in layer one are reflected in the energy paradigms of both the EU and Russia. As such, in structuring this layer, the following questions will be addressed: How are the historical and mutual narratives of Western Europe and Russia

²⁴⁴ I., B., Neumann *Russia and the Idea of Europe*, New York: Routledge, 1996

²⁴⁵ Neumann, *Uses of the Other. The East in European Identity Formation*

(layer one) reproduced in the energy paradigms of the EU and Russia in relation to each other (layer two)?

In addition, this layer identifies two competing energy paradigms – ‘Market and Institutions’ (MI) and ‘Regions and Empire’ (RE) – which refer to two different visions of energy governance employed by the EU and Russia internally and in their mutual energy relations. A further question is: How did the EU and Russia discursively construct their energy paradigms around the MI and RE? In order to do so, the chapter provides examples demonstrating how the EU and Russia have (discursively) utilized these energy paradigms and what is the underpinning historical narrative and representation. In other words, the aim of the chapter is to demonstrate how the use of one paradigm or another is consistent with (or is justified in a way that looks consistent with) the historical narratives and representations identified in layer one. As with the construction of layer one, for the construction of layer two, it will be necessary to embark on a historical evolution of how these energy paradigms have come about. However, the time span analyzed in respect of the construction of layer two is shorter compared to the construction of layer one. Indicatively, the temporal trajectory of layer two is mainly limited to the energy debate in the second half of the twentieth century.

This exercise will help map and contextualize the meaning of EU-Russia energy relations by taking into account basic narratives and representations (layer one) and energy paradigms adopted by the EU and Russia (layer two). The interaction between layers one and two is grasped through a top-down and a bottom-up perspective. In particular, as for a top-down perspective, the analysis at narrative level (layer one) helps us to understand how the broader historical encounter and mutual representations influences the energy governance adopted by the EU and Russia in their mutual energy relations (layer two). In addition, a bottom-up perspective suggests that through their mutual energy relations (layer two), the EU and Russia contribute to constructing and reinforcing their historical identities (layer one). Layer two emerges from a mix of primary and secondary sources. This includes official texts of the EC, official speeches of Russian and EC officials, media and Western academic debates.

4.3 Layer Three: The Discursive Practices of the EU and Russia: The Cases of Nabucco-South Stream Pipeline Politics and the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue (Chapters 5 and 6)

Layer three switches the analytical strategy from general discursive structure resulting from layers one and two, to the concrete performance of such a structure in the context of the energy relations between the EU and Russia. As such, while layers one and two are discursively constructed, layer three focuses more on the study of concrete policies and, in doing so, it adds specificity to the discursive structure which emerged from layers one and two. Layer three also elucidates the reasons why actors adopt certain energy policies rather than others. In fact, it will be demonstrated that an actor pursues a specific energy paradigm and its deriving policies (layers two and three) only when it recognizes a link with the historical narratives in which it represents itself (layer one). In order to empirically support the layered structure of meaning, layer three proposes two case studies in two separate chapters: the pipeline politics on the South Stream vs Nabucco, and the EU-Russia ED.

The reason why these two cases have been selected is because the literature commonly explains them by assuming ‘confrontation’ and ‘cooperation’ as the dominant discourses respectively.²⁴⁶ While these readings may be accurate, this thesis rejects the fact that the above-mentioned discourses are given; the aim, in fact, is to deconstruct these assumed discourses and explore how they become constructed as dominant / hegemonic to describe the two cases. That is, how dominant discourses triumphed against antagonism from competing discourses. By doing so, it will be demonstrated that ‘confrontation’ and ‘cooperation’ are not always valid and fixed lens of analysis for these two case studies, rather they alternate. From this perspective, the assumed discourses might also turn out to be misleading and possibilities are open for alternative explanations.

In practical terms, layer three focuses extensively on concrete policies, officials’ speeches and other documents from which it is possible to derive the nature of EU-Russia energy relations. Consequently, in order to build this layer, mainly primary sources will be examined.

²⁴⁶ Morozov for example assumes an identity conflict in the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue, see for example Morozov, in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe’s Future Energy Security*

To sum up, the aim of this thesis is to offer a discursive structure to contextualize the ongoing energy debate between the EU and Russia. In particular, by drawing from the layered structure elaborated by Ole Wæver, this research proposes to build a three-layered structure to analyze how those relations are impregnated with questions of identity. In line with the overall aim of the thesis, the case studies aim to provide an innovative reading of two of the most keenly debated issues that is detached from a mere rationalist analysis and from the existing discourse-based approaches. The proposed reading of the two case studies focuses on uncovering the discursive structure underlying EU-Russia relations through a comprehensive methodology that studies discourses as made up of three ‘degrees of sedimentation’.

The next chapter constructs layer one and explores the historic narratives and representations in West-Russia relations. In other words, it examines the various representations and narratives through which the West/Western Europe and Russia established their identities and represented themselves in relation to the Other throughout the centuries.

Chapter 3 - Historic Narratives and Representations in West- Russia Relations

1 Introduction

This chapter is centered on layer one that explores the historic narratives and representations in relations between Western Europe and Russia. This layer attempts to investigate the historic position of Western Europe / EU in Russia's identity debate on the one side, and the representations of Russia in the various phases of Western European / EU history on the other. In other words, the aim is to examine the narratives and representations existing respectively in Russia in relation to Western Europe / EU and those existing in Western Europe / EU in relation to Russia.

In order to avoid confusion, the differences among the concepts of 'West', 'Western Europe / EU' and 'Europe' will be better investigated through the examination of the existing narratives in Russia. As a general rule, this thesis refers to the 'West' in the sense of Western civilization as a whole. In Russian political discourse, the terms 'Western Europe' and the 'EU' are seen as expressions of Western civilization. Therefore, these distinctions will be used unless a clear difference is noted throughout the historical period considered. Perceived as constitutive Others of Russia, the West, Western Europe and the EU undoubtedly represent a key component of Russia's identity formation. Conversely, the Russian vision of 'Europe' is more complex. The geographical and cultural ambiguity of Russia vis a vis Europe, generates a situation in which the concept of Europe alone is not a sufficient element that impacts on Russia's identity.²⁴⁷ As a result of this ambiguity, Russians generally perceived themselves as being both outside and inside Europe. Given such a liminal position, 'Europe' represents an empty-signifier, imbued with political meaning and, in constant flux.²⁴⁸ For example, when Russians consider 'Europe' as the embodiment of the West and Western civilization, the feeling of belonging to it is questioned.²⁴⁹

Another key issue to clarify regards the extent to which historical Western Europe and Russian empire (including USSR) can be assumed to represent the EU and the Russian

²⁴⁷ Heller, in Browning, Lehti, (2010), *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, p. 34

²⁴⁸ Makarychev, *Russia's Discursive Construction of Europe and Herself: Towards New Spatial Imaginery*, pp.1-3

²⁴⁹ V., Morozov, In Search for Europe: Russian Political Discourse and the Outside World, *eurozine*, 2004c, pp 1-3. Available from: <http://www.eurozine.com/pdf/2004-02-18-morozov-en.pdf> Accessed 20/11/2013

Federation. In fact, a critique could be moved that Western Europe and imperial Russia do not exactly represent their contemporary entities. For example, imperial Russia has historically been the expression of a much broader political entity than the contemporary Russian Federation. This critique is particularly evident in relation to Eastern European countries, which, in different phases of history, have politically been associated with Russian empire and USSR, as well as Western Europe and the EU. In particular, some of the Eastern European countries – now officially member states of the EU – have been historically described as ‘Eastern Europe’ with closer political ties with Russia, especially during the Soviet experience. Thus, they represented historical Other of Western Europe and part of the Russian Self. Their accession to the EU in 2004 has overturned such a scheme.

Although this can be seen as a limitation, the ‘politics of becoming’ could help to fill such a gap. As noted, critical constructivism holds that both Self and Other are complementary entities. To understand the Self, it is necessary to study Other’s reaction to Self’s attempts to construct its collective identity.²⁵⁰ However, unlike the conventional constructivist vision – that portrays actors as having clearly defined statist borders and identities – a critical approach implies that these categories are in constant evolution and construction. The ‘politics of becoming’ is further justified through Foucault’s genealogical methods of analysis. As noted, in the previous chapter, genealogy regards the study of research objects (e.g. Western Europe and Russia) by examining the historical practices from which they were constructed.²⁵¹ Following the Foucaultian approach, genealogy regards the history of how the Self became itself through its interaction with Other and it also implies that Self and Other evolve and their borders and relationship are subject to change.

In this light, the EU’s 2004 enlargement could be interpreted as an expansion of the borders of historical Western Europe, a consequent contraction of imperial Russia, and ultimately a notable redefinition of their identities.

Generally speaking, since the end of the Cold War debates about ‘true’ Europeaness, have been associated with membership of the EU. This implied that the EU, originally set up as a Western organisation, increasingly described itself as the embodiment of Europe. The EU

²⁵⁰ M. Malksoo, *The Politics of becoming European: A study of Polish and Baltic post-Cold war security imaginary*, Oxon: Routledge, 2010, p.2

²⁵¹ D., Howarth J. Torfing, *Discourse theory in European politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, pp. 318-319, quoted by Malksoo, *The Politics of becoming European: A study of Polish and Baltic post-Cold war security imaginary*, p.3

proved to have no fixed boundaries and EU's enlargements imply a formal ratification of EU's Treaties through which new member states commit to introduce the body of EU laws at national level. Besides the formal recognition as Western European through the EU membership, Eastern European countries have also solved the dilemma between 'true Europe' and 'Europe but not quite Europe' and, thus acquired subjectivity as Western European.²⁵²

Through the concept of the temporal dimension, Diez notes that the EU has projected itself in the Eastern European new members, which now represent a small-scale version of the West European Self.²⁵³ In other words, as in a father/son relationship, Eastern European members should be seen as the early stage of the evolution of the Western European self. From a Western European perspective, while new Eastern European members of the EU are seen as that part of 'East' that has returned on the right path after a confused past, Russia – also seen as the image of Western European past – still represents that part of the 'East' that keeps deviating from the 'right' path.

The rest of the chapter is divided into two sections. The first maps the Russian debate on the role of the West / Western Europe in Russian identity politics and its resulting impact on the vision of 'Europe'. Three narrative fields can be detected: exceptionalism ('Russia as exceptional Great Power'), westernism ('Russia as learner of the West) and pragmatic statism ('Russia as Sovereign State'). As a result, Western Europe is constructed as the 'intrusive West', the 'equal partner' or the 'model'. Similarly, the second section illustrates the narratives through which Western Europeans have represented themselves in relation to Russia. Western Europe / EU relies on the following basic narratives for its self-representation: 'Europeanization', 'Civilian Empire' and 'Concert of Europe'. As a result, Russia is constructed as a 'learner', 'threat', 'equal partner' or even 'land of the future'.

In general, each of these narratives detected embed a specific view on 'Europe' as a political project. More specifically, these views are ascribable to the divide between false / true 'Europe'. This is the master narrative used to understand the concepts of 'Europe' in Russia and Western Europe. From a Russian perspective, 'false Europe' includes

²⁵² M. Malksoo, *The Politics of becoming European: A study of Polish and Baltic post-Cold war security imaginary*, pp.1-2

²⁵³ T., Diez, *Europe's other and the return of Geopolitics*, p. 326 quoted by M. Malksoo, *The Politics of becoming European: A study of Polish and Baltic post-Cold war security imaginary*, p.73

countries with anti-Russian sentiments and those that have lost an understanding and commitment to 'genuine European values'. Conversely, 'true Europe' is composed by those nations friendly to Russia, that comply with what Russia considers to be 'the original spirit of Europe', and thus that have some degree of cultural affinity to Russia.²⁵⁴ A similar true / false divide can also be hypothesized in the Western European view of 'Europe'. 'False Europe' includes countries, which reject liberal and democratic principles or that are ruled by an autocratic political regime. In contrast, European states that have adopted Western European principles – or that have shown political will to do so - are considered as part of the 'true Europe'.²⁵⁵

Such a divide has provided the basis for both Western Europe and Russia to define themselves as the 'defender of European values', to judge the 'Europeaness' of the Other, and ultimately to define their belonging to 'Europe'. In other words, on the one side, this divide enables the Self to construct its 'true' European identity through Othering the Europeaness of the 'false' Other. On the other side, the Other holds a constitutive role for the Self's identification as European.

The conclusion underlines how these narratives and representations are not completely separate but rather often present similarities. In addition, they advance various descriptions of the Other that are historically available (e.g. 'threat', 'learner', 'norm-maker' / 'norm-taker', 'developed' / 'underdeveloped', 'equal'). These possible options of Otherness help measure the 'degree of Otherness' and explain the actors' position of conflict or cooperation.

2 The Nineteenth Century Debate on Russia's Identity

This section illustrates the representations of 'Western Europe' and the 'West' in Russian internal debate over its identity. As noted in the introduction, before starting the analysis, it

²⁵⁴ See Makarychev, *Russia's Discursive Construction of Europe and Herself: Towards New Spatial Imaginery*.

See also Morozov, *Inside/Outside. Europe and the Boundaries of Russian Political Community*
See also Neumann, *Self and Other in International Relations*

²⁵⁵ For example, Morozov (in *Inside/Outside. Europe and the Boundaries of Russian Political Community*, p.9) has explained how Russian political discourse portrayed the Baltic States' support for the Chechen rebels and their ambition to achieve a NATO membership as examples of the 'false', anti-Russian Europe. On the other side, during the Cold War, the Western bloc has tended to discredit the Soviet experiment by representing it as a wrong (false) model of development.

is important to elaborate more on the distinction often made in Russian internal debate between the terms 'West' and 'Europe'. In Russian political thought, the 'West' is viewed as an 'alien' political entity and embodiment of a distinct civilization. From this perspective, Russia tends to understand Western Europe as the part of the European continent adhering to the principles promoted by the West. It follows that the EU is the political project of Western Europe based on Western principles.

Conversely, 'Europe' is not seen necessarily as an expression of an antagonistic entity as is the case for the term 'West' which, historically represents a rival force. Russia might belong to 'Europe' while her belonging to the 'West' has been much more contested.

When, in the nineteenth century Russian thinkers initiated a debate on the relationship between Russia and the 'West', the concept of 'Europe' alone was not solid enough to represent a constructive Other for Russian identity. In fact, culturally and geographically Russia was understood as being both outside and inside 'Europe', and therefore the latter did not represent a completely separated entity.²⁵⁶ Examples of Russia's liminal position in 'Europe' can be easily provided. Although being part of Christendom, Russia was an Orthodox country rather than Roman Catholic. Russian language belongs to the Indo-European tradition that draws from both European and Asiatic linguistic lines. Moreover, geographically Russia spans two continents, Europe and Asia. On one side, the containment of barbarians and the consequent feeling of superiority over those backward groups threatening her borders engendered a clear-cut sense of belonging to Europe and an understanding of Russia as 'Europe's defender'. On the other side, the expansion of Russia's sphere of influence eastward, the myth of the 'wild men of the Caucasus' created by Russian intelligentsia, and the presence of a massive agrarian population challenged the sense of commonality with most 'civilised' European nations.²⁵⁷ Overall, historically Russia has had ambivalent relations with Europe. As Baranovsky put it:

For Russia Europe was always both charming and frightening, appealing and repulsive...Russia was anxious to absorb Europe's vitality – and to ward off its contaminating effects; to become a fully-fledged member of the European family of nations and to remain removed from it.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁶ Heller, in Browning, Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, p. 34

²⁵⁷ Heller, in Browning, Lehti, (*The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, pp. 34-35

²⁵⁸ V., Baranovsky, Russia: A part of Europe or apart from Europe? in A Brown, *Contemporary Russian Politics: A reader*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 430, quoted by D., Gowland, and R., Dunphy, and C., Lythe *The European Mosaic: Contemporary Politics, Economics and Culture*, Harlow: Pearson

Heller argues that the concept of the 'West' as a distinct category emerged as a solution to this ambiguity. During the modernisation process that occurred in the nineteenth century, the distinction between 'Europe' and the 'West' became clearer. The most developed part of Europe started to describe itself as being both 'Western' and more civilized. This new description indicated a need for a distinction between the civilized part of Europe (Western Europe) and the Other part of Europe – defined as 'Eastern' –which included Russia.²⁵⁹

The notion of the 'West' – understood as a social and political category – appeared in Russia after the failed coup of the Decembrists²⁶⁰ in 1825 and it was the object of the intellectual debate of the 1840s among Russian intellectuals who discussed the relationship of Russia with the 'West'.

This debate saw Russian intellectuals divided into two groups: those who wanted Russia to follow the West and to borrow its values and those who believed that Russia had to defend its 'distinctive path of development'. These tendencies were intertwined in Russia's search for identity.²⁶¹

In the first half of the nineteenth century, Peter Chaadaev, an intellectual who had played an active role during the Napoleonic wars, wrote a letter referring to 'Europe' as 'Western'. He used the term 'West' to refer to 'Europe' as a separate and superior civilization. Having identified the 'West' as the embodiment of 'Europe', he specifically placed Russian civilization as subject to comparison, thereby seeking to demonstrate its backwardness. As an extreme Westerniser, Chaadaev even came to affirm that Russia had not contributed to the development of European culture.²⁶²

This letter is important because it represents the starting point of a dispute that opposed Slavophiles and Westernisers. The dispute initiated by Chaadaev concerned whether Russia's identity derives from an independent process of development or whether it was

Education Limited, 2006, p.43

²⁵⁹ Heller, in Browning, Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, p. 35

²⁶⁰ The Decembrists were Russian officials of the Napoleonic wars, writers and intellectuals who rejected Russia's regression. Yet, Decembrist had different views on the basic principles underlying the political constitution to be introduced in Russia. In particular, divisions emerged on what systems of government (centralism vs federalism) and form of government (constitutional monarchy vs republicanism) would be most appropriate for Russia.

²⁶¹ G., Diligensky, and S., Chugrov, *The 'West' in Russian mentality*, NATO Office for Information and Press, Brussels; Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Moscow, 2000, p. 9

²⁶² N., Berdyayev, *The origins of Russian Communism*, US-Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1960, p. 26

See also Heller, in Browning, Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, pp. 37-38

the result of the influence of the 'West'. Chaadaev claimed that world history consisted of the gradual inclusion of peoples into the civilization initiated by the Roman Catholic Church (i.e. West European civilization), and that Russia had no role in this process.²⁶³ Based on the claims of Chaadaev's letter, two schools of thought – the Slavophiles and the Westernizers – commenced a long series of polemical disputes over the character of Russian history contributing, at the same time, to shaping the concept of the 'West' as a social and political 'signifier'.²⁶⁴

Westernisers positively assessed the impact of Western European civilization as well as Peter the Great's reforms (1672- 1725) to westernise Russia. For them the 'West' was used as a benchmark to measure the political, legal, economic, social, and religious backwardness of Russia that remained characterised by feudalism and an autocratic monarchy, while many Western European regimes – influenced by the Enlightenment – had overthrown absolutist monarchism.²⁶⁵ As such, Russian Westernisers perceived a need for a strategy through which Russia could begin a process of cooperation with the West and undertake the path of modernization by absorbing Western ideas in the conviction that Russia's future depended upon the adoption of universal Western standards and ideas. Unlike Chaadaev, the Westernizers did not criticise the entire Russian spirit, but rather rejected oppressive and exploitative Russian practices, which they classified as 'Eastern', 'Oriental' or 'Tartar'. For example, Vissarion Belinsky, a Russian writer and literary critic of Westernising tendency, did not aim to reject Russian culture, but rather pushed for Russians to evolve in a 'European spirit'.²⁶⁶ Within the Westernizing tradition, Herzen contributed to the creation of a sub-narrative that identified the American-West – and not the European-West – as the promoter of progress. In fact, he thought the concept of 'Europe' was a disappointment as its proposals to disseminate democracy triggered instead aggressive nationalism rather than freedom. America

²⁶³ P., T., Grier The Russian Idea and the West in R., Bova, *Russia and Western Civilization*, New York: Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data, 2003, pp.28-29

In his letter Chaadaev argued that: '*One of the worst features of our peculiar civilization is that we have not yet discovered truths that have elsewhere become truisms, even among nations that in many respects are far less advanced than we are. It is a result of never having walked hand in hand with other nations; we belong to none of the great families of mankind; we are neither of the West nor of the East, and we possess the traditions of neither. Somehow divorced from time and space, the universal education of mankind has not touched upon us*'. Quoted by Grier, in Bova, *Russia and Western Civilization*, p.33

²⁶⁴ Heller, in Browning, Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, pp. 33-34

²⁶⁵ Grier, in Bova, *Russia and Western Civilization*, p. 15

²⁶⁶ Heller, in Browning, Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, p.39

instead could, in his view, better contribute to the advancement of humanity.²⁶⁷

As a response to Chaadaev's provocation and to the claims of Westernizers, Slavophile thinkers developed an alternative narrative with principles emphasizing things such as the autonomy of the Eastern Orthodox Church (rather than the state), the importance of rural community, opposition to the savage individualism of Western liberalism and the importance of the concept of 'sobornost' (Spiritual community). The Slavophiles believed that Russia had to return to its original culture (before Peter the Great 'opened a window to Western Europe'²⁶⁸). This implies that Slavophiles believed in the superiority of Russian civilization over the West, which, as a consequence, was seen in confrontational terms.²⁶⁹ For Slavophiles the history of Russia undertook a very different path compared to the Roman empire. Kireevsky, a Slavophile thinker, considered that contemporary Western civilization deviated from the established path of history and acquired tendencies that resulted in the realization of a society founded upon the institution of private property and radical individualism, and in which individuals' lives are joined only through a 'social contract.'²⁷⁰ Conversely, these features were not rooted in Russian culture. Thus, Kireevski used the terms 'West' and 'Europe' as synonyms and in opposition to Russia and the 'East'.²⁷¹

Despite evidence of competing ideologies, the differences between Westernisers and Slavophiles were not always clear-cut. Although they use two different entities as their terms of reference – the notion of the 'West' on one side, and the East / Orthodoxy on the other side – a number of themes such as uniqueness / exceptionalism, universal goodness, superiority, and a sense of messianism constitute common features of both narratives. For instance, Slavophiles believed that Russian civilization was unique and superior to the Western culture because it was based on the Orthodox Church, and on the superior character of Russian social structure (e.g. peasant communities governed by popular assembly). Drawing from Slavophilism,

²⁶⁷ Heller, Ibidem

²⁶⁸ Peter the Great founded St.Petersburg with a view that it would serve as 'window to the West'. This opened Russia to Western European influences.

²⁶⁹ Heller, in Browning, Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, p.38

²⁷⁰ Grier, in Bova, *Russia and Western Civilization*, p.38

²⁷¹ World New Research, *Finding the West*. Available from: <http://world-news-research.com/findingwest5.html> Accessed 7/12/2013

Tolstoy also argued that Russia should take an 'exceptional' path based upon the independent peasant community. The mission of Russian civilization was that of rescuing the world from its current decline caused by the West. Similarly, by indicating the Western path as the model to follow for modernization and by denying Russia's unique character, Westernisers implicitly claimed the superiority and the universal goodness of Western civilization and ideas. Moreover, similarly to Slavophilism, writers coming from a Western-oriented perspective, such as Belinsky specifically believed that Russia had a 'special mission'.²⁷² Finally, as Berdyaev, reports, both doctrines included visionary aspects and set their purposes in opposition to the insufferable regime of tsar Nicholas II.²⁷³

With time, Slavophilism and Westernism began to disintegrate and evolve into revised ideologies. Internal divisions between those favoring conservative reforms and those advocating a nationalistic / Panslavist approach caused the fall of Slavophilism in the 19th century. The strong support for the latter was driven by Russia's defeat in the Crimean War (1854–56). As for Westernisers, some remained moderate liberals, while others embraced a nihilist position, a radicalized version of Westernism (see below).²⁷⁴ Despite some differences, Panslavism represents a development of Slavophilism. Intellectually, it drew on the romantic ideas of early Slavophiles, such as Alexei Khomyakov and Ivan Aksakov.²⁷⁵ Specifically, Panslavism called for the unity and 'brotherhood of Slavic peoples'²⁷⁶ and not only by that of Russian Slavs as initially claimed by Slavophilism.

Also, Panslavism took from Slavophilism the idea that Russian civilization was superior to that of its Western European competitors. Moreover, the Panslavist vision of the ideal government echoed the Slavophile notion of an idealized peasant community with freedom allowed in the local sphere but with the central government devoid of people's representatives in the domain of high politics. Further, although expressed differently, both narratives focused on the role of the state. Unlike Slavophilism, which conceived of the state as an indispensable entity to be tolerated,

²⁷² Heller, in Browning, Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, pp. 38-39

²⁷³ N. Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea*, USA: The Macmillan Company, 1947, p.41

²⁷⁴ C., Williams, *Slavophile*, Encyclopedia of Russian History, The Gale Group Inc., 2004. Available from: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3404101244.html> Accessed 20/11/2013

²⁷⁵ N. V. Riasanovsky, *Russian Identities: A Historical Survey*, Oxford:Oxford University Press, 2005, p.198

²⁷⁶ Grier, in Bova (2003), *Russia and Western Civilization*, p.57

Panslavists saw the state as a necessary tool for national development and for the constitution of the Panslavic empire. A centralized and autocratic Russian state had to restore unity within the dispersed slavdom and oppose all forms of Western particularism.²⁷⁷

Regarding the link between imperial ambitions and the ethnic theme, if Slavophiles were mainly concerned to define Russia's authentic culture, Nicholas Danilevsky, a conservative nationalist considered the most influential Panslavist thinker, promoted Panslavism as a project to unite all Slavic people under Russian leadership against the imperialist Great Powers.²⁷⁸ Such a vision demonstrates how relevant the imperialist and nationalist theme was for Panslavism.²⁷⁹

In addition, by stressing that Europeans fuelled mistrust and suspicion towards Russia's imperialist ambitions in geopolitical affairs, Danilevsky also traced a distinction between the European – meant as Western – and Russian civilization. Europe and Russia were separate and competing civilizations.²⁸⁰ He rejected the idea of a single master narrative of world history. Rather, all civilisations were distinctive individual organisms with their own peculiar values. As such, the West did not discover any universal truths. The principles informing Western civilization were not universal. Russia could not subscribe to the false ideology of Westernism and become – along with other Slavic populations – an imitation of the West. Rather, Danilevsky described Russia as the latest and most vigorous among other civilizations, and, thus, destined to surpass all the others. In his version of Panslavism, Danilevsky believed that a clash between Europe and Russia was inevitable. From the conflict, the peaceful and stable Slavic civilisation was destined to take over as leader of the nations and spread peace in the world.²⁸¹

In this version of Panslavism a number of themes can be gleaned: messianism, the superiority of Russia and Slavic civilization, Russia's imperial ambition, mistrust towards the imperial ambitions of Western Europe, rejection of Western principles, and an emphasis on the clash of civilizations.

Dostoevsky built on this nationalist element elaborated by Panslavists. He argued that the Russian nation was superior to all others and endowed with the vital mission to

²⁷⁷ A.S., Tuminez, *Russian Nationalism since 1856*, Boston: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000, p.72

²⁷⁸ Heller, in Browning, Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, p. 39

²⁷⁹ Mark Bassin, *Imperial Visions: Nationalist Imagination and Geographical Expansion in the Far East, 1840-1865*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp.11-12

²⁸⁰ Heller, in Browning, Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, p.40

²⁸¹ Heller, *Ibidem*

carry out what he referred to as the ‘universal pan-human unification’. This messianic sense of the destiny of the Russian people (so-called Russian Idea) to rescue humanity and bring it into a universal harmony combined elements of the Slavophile narrative with elements of Christian-Orthodox messianism, and Third Romeism.

On the other side of the spectrum, the Westernising narrative also evolved into more extreme positions. As a result, a new group of thinkers, known as the nihilists or ‘men of the sixties’ emerged in the 1860s. This generation of Westernisers backed an extreme version of ‘westernization’ as the only source of historical meaning in the contemporary world. Furthermore, scientific rationalism and materialism were the supreme principles to pursue in order to organize all aspects of social life.²⁸² This narrative excluded Russia completely, and called for the destruction of the existing Russian order in favour of a new world order.²⁸³ In framing their thought on Russian history, nihilists advanced three connected ideas: the destruction of the old Russia, Russia as the natural location for a landmark revolution, and the consequent creation of a new kind of humanity and society emerging from that Russian revolution.²⁸⁴ These ideas became rapidly popular among Russian intellectuals. As Berdyaev reports, the communist generation of the Russian revolution drew from the nihilist focus on natural sciences and political economy²⁸⁵, which can be seen as the primary source of Bolshevism.²⁸⁶ In fact, the nihilist and anarchic belief in the destruction of Russian autocracy as the solution to establish the new Russia, influenced Lenin’s version of socialism. Particularly, Lenin’s revolutionary ideals took inspiration from the principles outlined in the ‘Catechism of the Revolutionary’, a manifesto authored by Sergey Nechayev, a Russian revolutionary associated with the nihilist movement.²⁸⁷ However, nihilism gradually became a loosely organized revolutionary movement that rejected the authority of the state, church, and family. Generally, it was too disorganized and fanatic

²⁸² P., Alan, *Nihilism*, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Available from <http://www.iep.utm.edu/nihilism/> Accessed 18/01/2014

²⁸³ Grier, in Bova, *Russia and Western Civilization*, p.28

One of the most influential written work produced by the Nihilist movement was *What Is to Be Done?* by Chemshevsky in 1863. Lenin argued that he has been inspired by it.

²⁸⁴ Grier, in Bova, *Russia and Western Civilization* p.57

²⁸⁵ N., Berdyaev, *The origins of Russian Communism*, p. 49

²⁸⁶ A. B., Ulam, *Ideologies and Illusions: Revolutionary Thought from Herzen to Solzhenitsyn*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976, p. 28

²⁸⁷ The Art of Polemics – Magazine, *The Influences of ‘The Catechism Of The Revolutionary’ on Lenin*, 6 March 2014. Available from : <http://theartofpolemics.com/2014/03/06/the-influences-of-the-catechism-of-the-revolutionary-on-lenin/> Accessed 28/07/2014

to persist as a movement and never had enough momentum, or the right conditions to become a structured philosophy. As such, it gradually evolved into political terror engendering a philosophy of violence. As a result, it can be considered as an approximation to a body of ideas rather than a proper narrative.²⁸⁸ For these reasons, it became a marginal narrative.

In 1920-21 a group of Russian émigré intellectuals²⁸⁹ contributed to the debate on Russia's identity, arguing that the century-long dispute between Slavophiles and Westernizers was misconceived. They developed a Eurasian ideology with roots harking back to Slavophilism. According to Delanty, Eurasianism attempted to overcome the split in the Russian intelligentsia between pro-reform Westernizers and pro-tsarist Slavophiles. Russia should not imitate European liberalism and democracy, or reject it altogether. Rather, Russia's unique role was to find a 'third way' between the Asian and European culture.²⁹⁰ Borrowing from Slavophilism, classical Eurasianism held that Russia was neither European nor Asiatic, but rather an independent historical civilization with a number of ethnic roots, including the Mongols who contributed to the development of the Russian state.²⁹¹ With reference to the 'West', Eurasianism drew from the nationalist tradition to define it as Russia-Eurasia's greatest threat and challenge.²⁹² The idea of a continued contrast with the 'West' and the perception of it as being the cause of all the negative historical events in Russia traced back to Danilevsky's Panslavism which, as noted, foresaw an opposition between Western European civilization and Russia-Eurasia.²⁹³ Also consistent with Slavophiles and Panslavism was that Eurasianism categorically rejected the Petrine project to westernise Russia. This was considered as a process aiming to undermine the ethno-cultural uniqueness of Eurasianism and impose the hegemony of the Western model, practices and codes. If Slavophilism and Panslavism combined a negative description of the 'West' with the ethnic ambition of uniting all Slavic peoples, the concept of 'anti-

²⁸⁸ The Site of Nihilist Anarchy, *A History of Russian Nihilism*, 2012. Available from: <http://pistolsdrawn.org/a-history-of-russian-nihilism/> Accessed 20/06/2013

²⁸⁹ Key representatives were Nicolas S. Trubetzkoy, Petr Nikolaevitch, Georgy V. Florovsky, Petr P. Suvchinsky.

²⁹⁰ G. Delanty, *Inventing Europe, Idea, Identity, Reality*, Hampshire and London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1995

²⁹¹ Grier., in Bova, (2003), *Russia and Western Civilization*, p.71

²⁹² M., Bassin, Eurasianism 'Classical' and 'Neo': The Lines of Continuity, in T., Mochizuki, eds., *Beyond the Empire. Images of Russia in the Eurasian Cultural Context*, Sapporo: Hokkaido University, 2008, p. 284

²⁹³ Bassin, in Mochizuki, *Beyond the Empire. Images of Russia in the Eurasian Cultural Context*, p. 289

Westernism' is much more emphasized in classical Eurasianism and presented in antithetical terms. In fact, Eurasianist thought is mainly based on the criterion of difference from and opposition to all that is an expression of Western culture. Unlike Slavophilism and Panslavism, Eurasianists abandoned the idea and strategy of Slavic unity.²⁹⁴ More specifically, the Eurasianists considered Eurasia to be a unique civilization, a continent in itself which occupies the center of the 'World Island' that the British geopolitician Halford John Mackinder called the 'Heartland'. Thanks to its geographical distinctiveness combined with its particular material and spiritual resources, Russia could emerge as the embodiment of the Eurasian independent entity. All these elements contributed to the development of classical Eurasianism as an 'isolationist' standpoint, especially when compared to its contemporary version (neo-Eurasianism) which can instead be categorized as 'expansionist' (see below).²⁹⁵ As it will be noted, this is an element that differentiates classical from post-Soviet neo-Eurasianism.

In general, it can be said that Eurasianism belongs to the Slavophile and Panslav tradition as it encompasses the themes of exceptionalism, uniqueness as well as opposition to the West. It also shares with Westernism and Slavophilism the features of civilizational superiority and the messianic mission. However, the vision of the West as a rival and threatening force is much more consolidated.

The Eurasian discourse re-emerged in a slightly revised form in reaction to the disappointing pro-Western orientation in Russia in the immediate years following the end of the Cold War. Neo-Eurasianism took the anti-Western orientation to the extreme. Aleksandr Dugin, leader of the International Eurasian Movement (a non-governmental organization), contributed to the essence of neo-Eurasianism as anti-Americanism. Dugin can be considered as a promoter of ultranationalist ideas as well as an 'integral traditionalist'. In 2000 he created the International Eurasian Movement attracting a number of highly-ranked officials.²⁹⁶ Dugin believes that the mission to lead the world belonged to Russia-Eurasia rather than to the US. In his Eurasian New World Order, Dugin identifies four macro-regions ('geoeconomic belts'): Euro-Africa, Asia-Pacific,

²⁹⁴ S.S., Khoruzhii, Transformations of the Slavophile Idea in the Twentieth Century, *Russian Studies in Philosophy*, Vol.34, No.2, 1995, pp. 7-25

²⁹⁵ Bassin, in Mochizuki, *Beyond the Empire. Images of Russia in the Eurasian Cultural Context*, p. 291

²⁹⁶ A., Shekhovtsov, The Palingenic Thrust of Russian Neo-Eurasianism: Ideas of Rebirth, in Aleksander Dugin's Worldview, *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, Vol. 9, No. 4, 2008, p. 491

America, and Eurasia. Importantly, relationships among the four zones should, for him, be based on the principles of equality and mutual recognition. Through an alliance of three of the macro-regions, Dugin intends to establish multi-polarity as the dominant mode of geopolitical power at the global level and, consequently, secure the elimination of the threat of American global hegemony.

Importantly, for the purpose of this thesis, it is worth noting that 'Western Europe' loses its traditional identity as the Other. The word 'Western' refers to the nations geographically located in the Western part of the European continent and it has no political meaning. In Dugin's scheme, Western European states (in a geographical sense) are potential allies for cooperation given their vulnerability – like all other parts of the world – to US hegemony. Therefore, given that 'Europe' has natural 'geopolitical affinities' with Russia-Eurasia, cooperation is not ruled out. This is Dugin's idea behind the so-called Paris-Berlin-Moscow axis.²⁹⁷ In short, although clearly anti-Western, neo-Eurasianism contemplated the possibility of cooperating with other states in the European continent, in contrast to the West. This idea of siding with geographical Western Europe reveals a strategy aiming to exacerbate divisions between the Europe-West and the US-West. This, in turn, refers to the specific theme of 'splitting the West'. Besides evoking the nationalist principle of classical Eurasianism, neo-Eurasianism also shares with Panslavism the theme of imperial ambitions as it believes in the creation of a global Eurasian empire. However, imperial ambitions go much beyond those of classical Eurasianism and Panslavism. Neo-Eurasianists aim to establish a universal empire that includes cooperation with 'greater' Eurasia including post-Soviet Russia, continental Islamic states, China, India, Eastern Europe and almost any non-Western country fighting against American hegemony. In particular while classical Eurasianism refers mainly to Western Europe as a point of 'otherness', Dugin's neo-Eurasianism offers a much broader understanding of the West, which refers to the entire Western universe. For Dugin, any country or region of the world that opposes American hegemonic designs and civilization, is potentially a part of Eurasia.²⁹⁸

Overall, the parallel between classical Eurasianism and neo-Eurasianism is an example of how themes belonging to the narrative debates of the 19th century – such as the uniqueness of civilization(s), the pursuit of national development distinct from the

²⁹⁷ Bassin, in Mochizuki, *Beyond the Empire. Images of Russia in the Eurasian Cultural Context*, p. 291

²⁹⁸ Bassin, in Mochizuki, *Beyond the Empire. Images of Russia in the Eurasian Cultural Context*, p. 293

West, statism and, cooperation – have re-appeared in twentieth century debates. Next section aims to further explore this parallel and to analyse how the debate on Russian's identity developed in the 20th century.

3 The Renewed Debate on Russia's Identity: From the Soviet Union to Post-Soviet Russia

As said, in the post-Soviet period, the debate over Russia's self-identity and on the role of the 'West' seems to have the fundamental nature of historical repetitiveness as they revolved around the dichotomy between the basic narratives of westernism and exceptionalism. In particular, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Western liberal democracy represented an attractive alternative for the formation of the new Russian state for many Russians. Conversely, advocates of Russian exceptionalism believed that the new Russian state had to be rebuilt on the basis of three notions: autocracy (samoderzhavie), the people (narodnost), and the Orthodox church (pravoslavie). Recalling the disputes between Westernisers and Slavophiles in the 19th century, the discursive tension in the post-Soviet period broadened into a controversy between Atlanticism (West-oriented) and nationalist-oriented narratives.²⁹⁹

In the first instance, from a Western perspective the reforms of 'glasnost' and 'perestroika' contributed to depict Mikhail Gorbachev as a pragmatic and less ideological leader.³⁰⁰ In particular, 'perestroika' referred to the restructuring of the Soviet political and economic system. As a fundamental component of 'perestroika', 'glasnost' called for parties and government to act more openly and, it could also be interpreted an attempt to increase the overall level of democracy by promoting the freedom of information and speech.³⁰¹ Yet, it is important to note that Gorbachev intended to regenerate rather than dismiss Soviet socialism, while preserving the Leninist outlook of his reforms. He rejected the way his predecessors had interpreted Leninism and called for reading Lenin 'in a new way'.³⁰² However, he also downplayed

²⁹⁹ B-S, Shin, *Eurasianess and National Identities in the Post-Soviet Era*, paper presented at the Conference Asia-Pacific Research Center, Resurgence of Eurasianism and the Future of Eurasia : A View from the East, Seoul: Hanyang University, 2009, p. 102

³⁰⁰ Joseph Gibbs, *Gorbachev's Glasnost: The Soviet Media in the First Phase of Perestroika*, Texas A&M University Press, 1999, p.9

³⁰¹ A. Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996, p.125

³⁰² A. Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*, p.225

some Leninist beliefs – such as the class struggle – while emphasising other principles such as the right of every country to determine its own international orientation and domestic political system. Thus, Gorbachev's approach presented an inner tension between the attraction to the Western European version of social democracy and the need to conform with traditional USSR's Leninism.³⁰³ The way he resolved this tension was through a selective reading of Leninism and by presenting his own ideas as being bequeathed from the 'real' Leninist orthodoxy.

He also dismissed the project of a European / global communist empire and promoted a Russian foreign policy based on the principles of cooperation with, and integration into, the 'West'. However, unlike new westernizers such as Yeltsin and Kozyrev who called for a complete integration with the West, Gorbachev's idea of integration did not imply a loss of identity of Russia. Rather, Russia had to be recognized as a country with distinct principles and willing to join forces with the West to contribute to world development.³⁰⁴ As McFaul put it, Gorbachev's idea was that 'the East might meet the West in some transformational blending of socialism and capitalism'.³⁰⁵ In other words, Gorbachev changed some of the fundamental elements of the foreign policy narrative supported during the Soviet period from conflict to cooperation and solidarity with the 'West'.³⁰⁶ As a result, in the Washington summit in June 1990, Gorbachev defined the US-USSR relationship as almost a 'partnership'.³⁰⁷

As for 'Europe', Gorbachev not only wanted to position Russia within a shared European discourse, he also opted for a proactive approach on the broader European scene as the launch of the 'Common European Home Initiative' demonstrates. According to Neumann, rather than delineating a distinction between the 'true' and the 'false' 'Europe', the concept of the Common European Home sought to recognize the fundamental civilizing unity of the European continent while preserving space for Russia to play a pivotal role.³⁰⁸ As such, the idea behind the Common European Home

³⁰³ A. Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*, p.120

³⁰⁴ A. P., Tsygankov, *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity. Change and Continuity in National Identity*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006, p.68

³⁰⁵ Michael McFaul, Russia and the West a Dangerous Drift, *Current History*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace October 2005, p.307

³⁰⁶ C. D., Blacker, Russia and the West, in Mandelbaum, M., eds., *The New Russian Foreign Policy*, New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1998, pp.4-5

³⁰⁷ G. E., Curtis, New Thinking: Foreign Policy under Gorbachev, in G. E. Curtis, eds., *Russia: A Country Study. Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress*, U.S. Library of Congress, 1996. Available from: <http://countrystudies.us/russia/17.htm> Accessed 7/07/2013

³⁰⁸ Neumann, *Self and Other in International Relations*, p.162 quoted by Haukkala, in Hopf., *Russia's European Choice*, p.50

– similarly to the policy of perestroika – was that of a gradual convergence and peaceful-coexistence between Western Europe and the USSR, which – despite basic differences – belong to the same continent and have contributed equally to its historical development.³⁰⁹

As Gorbachev precisely stated:

‘Some in the West are trying to ‘exclude’ the Soviet Union from Europe. Now and then, as if inadvertently, they equate ‘Europe’ with ‘Western Europe’. Such ploys, however, cannot change the geographic and historical realities. Russia’s trade, cultural and political links with other European nations and states have deep roots in history. We are Europeans. Old Russia was united with Europe by Christianity [...] The history of Russia is an organic part of the great European history’.³¹⁰

However, the Western bloc did not support Gorbachev’s politics of cooperation and integration. While the West proclaimed the successful end of the Cold War, Russians were more concerned about the worsening of their living standards and weakening of the Russian state. Internally, Gorbachev was victim of the polarization between statist, neo-imperialists and new liberal Westernizers and lost his initial support. Despite he did not intend to replace Russian socialist identity with a pro-Western liberalism, Gorbachev contributed to the rise of a new group of Westernizers.³¹¹

President Yeltsin and his foreign minister, Andrey Kozyrev, tried to seize the Westernizing momentum in the new Russia Federation.

The foreign policy conducted by Kozyrev favoured a cooperation with the ‘West’ in the conviction that a partnership was the only way to guarantee Russia’s future greatness

³⁰⁹ N., Malcom, The Soviet Concept of a Common European House, in J., Iivonem, eds., *The Changing Soviet Union in the new Europe*, Aldershot: Edward Elgar, 1991, p.66

See also I., B., Neumann, The Geopolitics of Delineating ‘Russia’ and ‘Europe’: The creation of the Other in European and Russian Tradition, in O., Tunander, P., Baev, and K., Einagel, V. I., eds., *Geopolitics in Post-Wall Europe: Security, Territory and Identity*, Oslo: SAGE, International Peace Research Institute, 1997, p.150

³¹⁰ M., Gorbachev, *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World*, New York: Harper and Row, 1987, p.190, quoted by Neumann, 1999, *Uses of the Other. “The East” in European Identity Formation*, p.163

³¹¹ Tsygankov, *Russia’s Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity. Change and Continuity in National Identity*, p.17

and boost Russia's economy.³¹² Interestingly, hinting at themes of multipolarity and equality, Kozyrev wrote that with the end of the USSR "the way was clear for Russia to claim its status of being a 'normal country' and to become a reliable partner in the community of civilized states".³¹³

The new pro-Western leadership believed that, faced with a strong Russia's commitment in favour of liberal reformism, the West would have provided the country with the necessary support to overcome the political and economic difficulties. But, these reforms were perceived as policies 'dictated' by the West and turned out to be irrelevant as the entire Russia economy was in free-fall.³¹⁴

Furthermore, once again the West inscribed the new Russia in the scheme of 'learner' of Europe. For example, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund sent top Western advisers such as Jeffery Sachs and Anders Aslund to tell Yeltsin how to set up a market economy.³¹⁵ In addition, Western governments announced plans to expand NATO to Central European countries once part of the Warsaw pact.

Overall, the West failed to grant Russia a full inclusion in the Western coalition contributing to fuel the feeling of alienation and humiliation among Russians.

In addition, the awareness of the declining capacity of the state made the Westernist opposition more powerful and offered it an opportunity to challenge the ruling elite.³¹⁶

As a result, a Realist doctrine of pragmatic statist – unhappy with the principles guiding the 'perestroika' – emerged in the 1993 parliamentary election and progressively increased their support.³¹⁷

The loss of internal appeal of the Westernist line and the simultaneous emergence of the statist movement led the new Westernist leadership to shape their initial political course in a way that was compatible with the growing statist thinking.

For example, Russia's relations with the West, were now framed more in terms of

³¹² Blacker, in Mandelbaum, *The New Russian Foreign Policy*, pp.177-178

³¹³ Blacker, in Mandelbaum, *The New Russian Foreign Policy*, p. 170

³¹⁴ Tsygankov, *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity. Change and Continuity in National Identity*, p.85

³¹⁵ James Heartfield, Yeltsin: the West's hero-turned-scapegoat, *Spiked*, 2007. Available from: http://www.spiked-online.com/newsite/article/3125#.U_yrCkh-S3A Accessed 26/08/2014

See also Robert H. Donaldson, Joseph L. Nogee, *The Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems, Enduring Interests*, New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2009, p. 9

³¹⁶ Tsygankov, , *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity. Change and Continuity in National Identity*, p.173

³¹⁷ M., Mandelbaum, Introduction: Russia Foreign Policy in Historical Perspective, in Mandelbaum, *The New Russian Foreign Policy*, pp. 5-6

‘shared interests’ than of cultural values and affinities.³¹⁸

The new Russia started to turn from a general pro-Western stance to a revisionist and a more nationalist attitude based on a commitment to political realism.³¹⁹

By the second half of 1993, Kozyrev intended to discard the initial narrative of ‘radical superdemocratism’ for a post-perestroika discourse of foreign policy that mainly focused on the ‘national interests of Russia’, its status of being a nuclear superpower, and its ‘regional responsibilities.’

References to Russia’s ‘national interests’ also replaced references to Russia’s ‘calling’ and ‘mission.’³²⁰ The fact that economic progress and domestic stabilization were prioritized over security issues in Russia’s national security priorities was a revolutionary shift. As a consequence, the messianic element (e.g. ‘Third Rome’, ‘world socialism’) – which was the long-standing principle of foreign policy-makers – became marginal and a process of ‘secularization’ and ‘liberation’ from the ‘special spiritual mission’ was fostered in Russian foreign policy. The country’s ‘vital interests’, it was declared, were domestic: ‘securing state and territory integrity’, ‘maintaining stability and strengthening constitutional order’, and ‘securing a stable progress in the economy and respectable standard of living for the people’. Importantly, after centuries, the concept of the Russian state was progressively ‘decoupled’ from that of the Russian empire.³²¹

A consequence of the detachment from the initial pro-Western stance was the assertive and threatening foreign policy in CIS countries, which was openly criticized by the Western world and ultimately at odds with the alleged adherence to Western principles of respect for international organisations. In a way that resembled a shortened version of the Brezhnev Doctrine (e.g. Moscow’s right to intervene in the former Communist world), at the UN General Assembly Kozyrev declared that: ‘Russia realizes that no international organization or group of states can replace our peacekeeping efforts in this

³¹⁸ Tsygankov, *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity*. Change and Continuity in National Identity, p.67

³¹⁹ V., Zhurkin, *Phases in Modern Russia's Foreign Policy*, Amsterdam: Rozenberg Publishers, 1996, p.5. Available from: http://www.rozenbergps.com/books/future_role_of_russia/zhurkin.pdf Accessed 15/09/2013

³²⁰ L., Aron, The Foreign Policy Doctrine of Postcommunist Russia and Its Domestic Context, in Mandelbaum, *The New Russian Foreign Policy*, p.24

³²¹ Aron, in Mandelbaum, *The New Russian Foreign Policy*, pp. 25-27

specific post-Soviet space.’³²² As such he defended the use of force against armed extremists in Chechnya.

Overall, it can be argued that, in the post-Gorbachev period, there was a need for a definition of new narrative that would combine inclination to cooperate with the ‘West’ (westernism) and the ambition to promote national interests.³²³ A combination of these two became more balanced when Primakov replaced Kozyrev as foreign minister, paving the way to the realist doctrine of pragmatic statism. This doctrine shared a number of features with (neo)-Eurasianism, such as the idea of a multipolar world order based on balancing powers and the strategy of pursuing regional alliances to counter-balance US hegemony. Along with these beliefs, pragmatic statism also includes elements of the Westernising narrative since cooperation and coexistence with the ‘West’ remained a significant opportunity for Russia’s economic development. The mix of pro-western liberalism and the patriotic-nationalism aspect of pragmatic statism engenders a view according to which Russia’s relations with the ‘West’ should follow the formula of integration and cooperation on the basis of equality, respect for mutual sovereignty and interests, and freedom to take decisions. In short, relations with the ‘West’ should occur through a civilised and privileged partnership between equals and not between leaders and followers.³²⁴ The balance between (neo)-Eurasianism and Westernism can be summarized by saying that contemporary Russia recognizes the values of western civilization (such as democracy, pluralism, capitalist market economy, and human rights) but at the same time, it feels entitled to define these values in her own terms. Importantly, it is relevant to note that the inclusion of such nationalist and pro-Western elements enables the doctrine of pragmatic statism to play out two separate discursive options. As such, when the pro-Western discourse is at work, pragmatic statism conceives of the ‘West’, not as posing a serious threat to Russia, but views it instead as a possible actor for co-operation. Western interests are seen as different from Russia’s but not antagonistic. In this circumstance, Russia is open to set relations with the ‘West’ on an equal basis. Conversely, if the nationalist card is played out, Russia perceives the

³²² O., Tarman, *Yeltsin's Brand of Power Politics*, The Harvard Crimson, 1 November 1993. Available from: <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1993/11/1/yeltsins-brand-of-power-politics-pbabfter/> Accessed 20/07/2013

³²³ Neumann, in Tunander, Baev, Einagel, *Geopolitics in Post-Wall Europe: Security, Territory and Identity*, pp. 147-173

³²⁴ Zhurkin, *Phases in Modern Russia's Foreign Policy*, pp.6-9

‘West’ as a threat to her interests and seeks cooperation with other states (e.g. Japan, South Korea, India, China) to restore the balance between ‘East’ and ‘West’, ‘North’ and ‘South’.³²⁵

Along with Eurasian and pro-Western themes, the doctrine of pragmatic statism also borrows from Panslavism the need for a strong central state. The state is seen as a tool to oppose all the external forces attempting to interfere in Russia’s domestic arena as they weaken state sovereignty and the interests of Russia.

The Russian foreign policy founded on these realist principles has been strongly endorsed since 1996 by the then foreign minister Primakov through concepts of multi-polar and multi-vector diplomacy and then by Putin (President of Russia from 2000 to 2008, and again elected in 2012) through the concept of ‘sovereign democracy’. At his first press conference, Primakov stated that Russian foreign policy would reflect the ‘country’s status as a great power’, that the main objective of Russian foreign policy is to protect and promote Russia’s ‘interests’ through an ‘equal, mutually beneficial partnership’ with the ‘West’ while avoiding confrontation.³²⁶ Primakov welcomed a ‘tendency’ toward a ‘multipolar world’ with a view to create an external environment enabling to economic growth.

Yet, Primakov’s intention to achieve a greater ‘balance’ in Russian foreign policy is to be seen in association with the notion of leverage. Similarly to the ‘divide and rule’ strategy, such an association can be described as the ability of Russia to improve its relative position in the international arena by splitting rivals.³²⁷

As an exponent of pragmatic statism, Putin formalized the slogan of ‘state patriotism’ and promoted the idea of the state as an ethnically neutral symbol of Russianness.³²⁸ Similarly to Primakov, Putin’s Russia has to ‘win its own place in the international system’ and

³²⁵ Shin, *Eurasianness and National Identities in the Post-Soviet Era*, p.109

³²⁶ Aron, in Mandelbaum, *The New Russian Foreign Policy*, pp.29-30

³²⁷ C.D., Blacker, Russia and the West, in Mandelbaum, *The New Russian Foreign Policy*, p.183

³²⁸ S., Ortmann, (2008), *Re-imagining Westphalia: Identity in S., Ortmann, IR and the Construction of the Russian State*, PhD Dissertation, London: London School of Economics, p.129

In order to promote the Russia’s status of Great Power, Putin also recalled symbols of Russia’s history. (e.g. the Tsarist double head eagle, the red flag for the army, and the renaissance of the Soviet Hymn. Symbolic events, such the Soviet victory in the Great Patriotic War, are also invoked to legitimize the present Russian state. Quoted by Ortomann, *Re-imagining Westphalia: identity in IR and the construction of the Russian state*

become an influential great power.³²⁹ Other priorities include boosting domestic reconstruction and the distinctiveness of Russia's civilisation vis a vis the 'West'. To achieve these goals, it is necessary to consolidate the Russian state, to gain influence over the ex-Soviet states and to exploit energy resources. As a result, geopolitics is a necessary tool. Evidence supporting the realist and geopolitical visions of Putin's Russia can be provided. For example, as a reaction to the United States' plans for a Ballistic Missile Defence shield – that included a partial extension to Europe - Putin stressed the unavoidability of an arms race and the possibility to re-target Russian missiles on Europe.³³⁰

With regard to Russia's 'near abroad', Russia's military invasion of Georgia in 2008 and Putin's project to create a Eurasian Union with ex-Soviet states further illustrates the rise of Russia's new imperialism and how Putin's version of pragmatic statism incorporates the imperial destiny proper of the Eurasian tradition.³³¹ In the case of the Georgian war, van Herpen argues that Russia acted as an imperialist great power by deliberately causing a regime change in Georgia. Similarly, the Eurasian Union represents an attempt to re-establish the lost empire and ground it on new basis.³³² In particular, with the Eurasian Union, Putin challenges the US-West global hegemony by 'suggesting a model of a powerful supranational union that can become one of the poles of today's world while being an efficient connecting link between Europe and the dynamic Asia-Pacific Region'.³³³ As for representations of the West and the EU, although considering US-West and EU-West as different entities, a conviction remains that behind the Western European projects of regional cooperation is hidden the neo-imperial plans of US-West to weaken the Russian state.³³⁴ In this respect, NATO enlargement 'represents a serious provocation that reduces the level of mutual trust'.³³⁵

³²⁹ S., Secieru, *Russia's Quest for Strategic Identity*, NATO Defence College Occasional Paper, 2006, p.15 quoted by Browning, *Reassessing Putin's project: reflections on IR theory and the West*, p. 8

³³⁰ Browning, *Reassessing Putin's project: reflections on IR theory and the West*, p.7

³³¹ Regarding Putin's project to create a Eurasian Union, see C., Clover, *Putin's Grand Vision and Echoes of '1984'*, Financial Times, 2 June 2013. Available from: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/2917c3ec-edb2-11e0-a9a9-00144feab49a.html#axzz1ZtuuYhwm> Accessed 15/10/2013

³³² Marcel van Herpen, *Putin's war: The rise of Russia's new Imperialism*, Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014, p.6 and 80

³³³ E.G., Ponomareva, *The Eurasian Union: A Threat to the New World Order*, Atlantic-Community.org, Available from: http://archive.atlantic-community.org/index/Open_Think_Tank_Article/The_Eurasian_Union:_A_Threat_to_the_New_World_Order Accessed 01/08/2013

³³⁴ C. S., Browning, *Reassessing Putin's project: reflections on IR theory and the West*, *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol.55, No.5, 2008, pp. 8-9

³³⁵ President of Russia Federation, *Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy*, 10 February 2007. Available from:

However, while frictions exist in sensitive issues such as military interventions and human rights, EU-West is also seen as a crucial partner in fighting against terrorism and in economic relations.

As Auerer put it, Russia's relations with European institutions – especially in the political-military field – fluctuates between the intention to develop strategic partnership and cooperative security on one side, and the objective to pursue an independent foreign and security policy on the other side.³³⁶

In fact, the image of EU-West is further complicated because of Putin's idea that Russian identity has a 'European calling'. Here, Putin does not endorse the Slavophile / Eurasianist tradition that conceives of the existence of multiple competing civilizations. Conversely, he is closer to Gorbachev's belief in the existence of an organic and unique (European) civilization to which Russia and EU-West belong but in which both actors can express their specificities and contending interpretations of political concepts. Therefore, Putin resists Western leaders' intention to clearly delineate borders of inside / outside on notions such as democracy and civilisation as well as their tendency to locate the 'West' as the guardian of universal civilisation entitled to interfere in others' democratic development.³³⁷

4 Overview

As demonstrated, Russian thinkers and politicians have contributed to create a number of narratives on how Russia relates to the 'West' and Europe. This section recaps the narrative positions and explains what they mean in light of the discursive framework under construction. As noted, Russia's encounter with 'Western' civilization ('Western Europe' and the EU) produced the following narratives: exceptionalism ('Russia as exceptional Great Power'), westernism ('Russia as learner of the West'), and pragmatic statism ('Russia as Sovereign State').

By referring to the themes of messianism and uniqueness, the exceptionalist narrative – in its different variants – represents Russia as a superior actor vis a vis Western Europe,

http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/02/10/0138_type82912type82914type82917type84779_118123.shtml Accessed 12/03/2013

³³⁶ D., Auerer, The Russian Military and European Security Cooperation, in Gower and Timmins, *Russia and Europe in the Twenty-First Century: An Uneasy Partnership*, p. 104

³³⁷ Browning, *Reassessing Putin's project: reflections on IR theory and the West*, pp.19-21

which is, in turn, represented as ‘inferior’, a ‘threat’, and ‘untrustworthy.’ In addition, Panslavism and neo-Eurasianism also add the theme of ‘imperial ambition’ of a Great Power Russia. In particular, Panslavists, emphasize the role of the state as a necessary tool for national development and for the constitution of the Panslavic empire. The state-centric theme reappears in the narrative of pragmatic statism.

With reference to Europe, Slavophilism and Panslavism used the terms ‘West’ and ‘Europe’ to refer to European culture, which is presented as both a separate entity from Russia and characterized by a divisive and conflictual nature.³³⁸ In addition, by stressing Russia’s unique character, Eurasianism believed that Russia is fundamentally distinct from both Europe and Asia. The neo-Eurasian project instead, foresees a mutually beneficial, peaceful and equal relationship with Europe, but only in anti-western perspective.

Conversely, the Westernizing narrative insists on the need to follow Western civilization, its socio-political system and culture in order to overcome Russia’s socio-economic backwardness.

Overall, by recognizing the superiority of the Western model, the westernizing narrative attributes Russia a role of ‘follower’ vis a vis the West which, in turn, comes to be represented as a ‘leader’, ‘partner’ or ‘model’. In other words, the themes of superiority or inferiority – evident in exceptionalist narratives – merged into the idea of cooperation and emulation of the Western model through mutual partnerships and integration. Kozyrev’s version undermined Russian imperial ambition and provided the foundation for a new foreign policy to be based on Russia’s national interests as a way to boost the economy. To achieve these, cooperation with the ‘West’ is again seen as necessary. The conception of Russia’s belonging to ‘Europe’ also changes since Russia’s belonging will occur only if the western model of development is adopted. In the Gorbachevian version, however, ‘Europe’ is a whole continent to which Russia belongs by virtue of her cultural ties and despite some differences.

Primakov and Putin were described as the main interpreters of the narrative of pragmatic statism. Primakov promoted a pragmatic statism that focused on the following principles: the central role of the Russian state, the principle of equality and

³³⁸ Heller, in Browning, Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, p.38-40

reciprocity with the West, and respect for mutual sovereignty in a multipolar international arena. Regarding the West, pragmatic statism combines elements of exceptionalism (especially eurasianism) and westernism. As such, depending on the circumstances, Western Europe/EU is either perceived as a cooperative partner or as a threat in which case Russia should seek cooperation with other states.

Finally, Putin sees the US-West and EU-West as equal partners of Russia, although the former is thought of as standing behind the actions of the latter. As for 'Europe', Russian identity has European traits.

In particular, the 'coloured metaphors' can help summarize how the main Russian narratives (exceptionalism, westernism and pragmatic statism) draw the border within 'Europe' and consequently how the relationship with Western Europe is understood. Exceptionalism relies on the 'red lines' metaphor which refers to a configuration through which Russia draws a neat line in Europe, between Russian civilization and a Western Europe perceived as an 'alien' entity. Pragmatic statism and to some extent neo-Eurasianism elicit a 'grey zone' metaphor which refers to Europe as an ambiguous area between the white (e.g. Western European democracy) and the black (e.g. autocracy). Russia feels not entirely accepted or completely alien. Conversely, westernism sees 'Europe' as a 'white zone'. This metaphor reflects a logic of convergence and sameness between Russia and Western Europe that derives from a feeling of belonging to the European continent and culture.³³⁹

Having illustrated Russia's narrative representations of itself in relation to the 'West' / Western Europe and 'Europe', the next section illustrates the narratives through which Western Europe / EU have represented itself in relation to Russia and 'Europe'.

5 West/Western Europe: The Representations of Russia as 'Learner', 'Threat', or 'Equal Power'?

If the 'West' and 'Europe' have been the main Others in Russia's identity formation, Russia can be considered as a crucial Other in the formation of the Western European

³³⁹ Makarychev, *Russia's Discursive Construction of Europe and Herself: Towards New Spatial Imaginery*, pp. 3-4

identity. As such, while the first section examined the internal debate within Russia, as to how it relates to the 'West' and 'Europe', similarly, this second section examines the narratives existing in Western Europe in relation to Russia. As for the concept of 'Europe', it can be argued that Western Europe has mostly tended to identify itself as the embodiment of the 'true' Europe and, from this perspective it has judged Russia's belonging to it.

Generally speaking, in developing its relations with Russia, Western Europe has positioned Russia as (i) a 'learner' who needs to be europeanized, (ii) a 'threat' aiming to subvert the political order of Western Europe, (iii) as a recognized 'equal Great Power', (iv) or as a 'land of the future'. This section will explore each of these narratives and representations.

Self-identified Westerners have certainly spent much effort outlining different visions of the concept of the 'West'. Historically, the concept of the West has been constructed around mainly three narratives revolving around ideas of civilisation, modernity and ideology.³⁴⁰ Ifversen identifies current internal debates that frame the concept of the 'West' by focussing on a transatlantic divide (US-EU), and intra-European divides (e.g. Atlantic Europe' vs 'European Europe', 'central and eastern Europe' vs 'western Europe').³⁴¹ However, rather than being only the result of an internal process of self-identification, outsiders have also contributed to the definition of the concept of the 'West'. According to Heller, Russia can be considered as the first and most important Other of Europe, an expression of 'Oriental despotism' against which Europe started to identify itself as 'Western'.³⁴²

One of the most used Western European representations of Russia is that of a 'learner' with no or little constitutive voice in the discourse on Europe. As a result of this narrative representation, Western Europeans believed that Russia had to be engaged in processes of reacting and adapting to Western European practices rather than impacting

³⁴⁰ C.S., Browning, and M., Lehti, The West. Contested, Narrated and Clustered, in Browning, Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, p.21

³⁴¹ J., Ifversen, Who are the Westernizers?, *International Politics*, Vol. 45, 2008, pp. 236-253
See also A., Bonnett, *The Idea of the West: Culture, Politics and History*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004

See also C., GoGwilt, True West: The Changing Idea of the West from the 1880s to the 1920s, in S., Federici, eds., *Enduring Western Civilization: The Construction of the Concept of Western Civilization and its 'Others'*, Westport: Praeger, 1995

³⁴² Heller, in Browning Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, pp. 34-35

on the structures of social knowledge and power.³⁴³ This intersubjective process contributed to the creation of Western Europe as a superior identity vis a vis the Russian 'learner'. Neumann's regime types argument represents the basis of Western European constructions of Russia as a 'learner' and ultimately contributed to Russia's construction as a 'threat'. As Russia's ability to project itself as a credible player augmented from the 18th century onwards³⁴⁴, the Great Powers in Western Europe had to face Russian claims about her parity or superiority with them. Neumann hypothesizes that the refusal of the Great Powers in Western Europe to accept the legitimacy of Russia's autocratic and feudal structures of governance explains Russia's difficulty in gaining recognition as a Great Power. This represents the main discourse through which Western Europe has been able to claim its superiority throughout history and to hold the power to locate Russia in international affairs.³⁴⁵

In light of this argument, Neumann rejects the realist assumptions according to which Great Power status depends on material factors (e.g. size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic potential, military strength, political stability and competence,³⁴⁶ and the ability to exert influence on a global or regional scale). Although in various phases of her history Russia was recognized as a Great Power (such as during the 19th century concert of Europe and in the aftermath of the second world war), in other epochs (e.g. Muscovy, Holy Roman Empire, during and following Peter the Great's reign, and finally in the Soviet period) Russia had the material resources of a Great Power but Western Europeans refused to recognize her as a member of the European concert and culture. In other epochs, Russia was recognized as a Great Power. As a result, reservations still remained in Western Europe about Russia's belonging to Europe. As Napoleon famously said 'scratch a Russian and find a Tartar'.³⁴⁷ One of the reasons for this continued understanding of Russia as 'Other' lies in the substantial difference in the regime established in Russia as opposed to that widespread in Western Europe. In other words, Western Europeans rejected Russia's Great Power status on the

³⁴³ P., Joenniemi, *Introduction by Guest Editor: Russia's narrative Resources*, pp. 121-127

³⁴⁴ See for example Russia's victory over the high-rank power of Sweden in 1721

³⁴⁵ I.B., Neumann, Russia's Standing as a Great Power, 1494-1815, in Hopf, *Russia's European choice*, p.30

³⁴⁶ K., Waltz, The Emerging Structure of International Politics, *International Security*, Vol. 18, No. 2., 1993, p. 50.

See also V., Danilovic, *When the Stakes are High. Deterrence and Conflict among Major Powers*, Ann Arbor (US): The University of Michigan Press, 2002, pp. 45-46

³⁴⁷ Heller, in Browning, Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, p.36

basis of the 'uncivilized' and backward nature of her regime.³⁴⁸ As such, the recognition of Russia was associated with the risk of a potential threat and a move back to the political arrangement of Western Europe. By stressing such political differences, the process of differentiation and the building of the 'otherness' of Russia was strengthened. This, at the same time, reinforced and legitimated claims of the 'West's' superiority.

Since the time of Muscovy (ca. 1147-1613), because of the wide presence of violent barbaric groups, Russia was perceived as a minor presence in the Western European part of the continent. The existence of different ethnic groups, labelled as barbaric groups was associated with the image of a threatening entity at Europe's gate, and an expression of an underdeveloped and inferior civilization because Western Europe had experienced barbarism only in ancient times. As such, Russians were negatively identified as 'Scythians', 'Tartars', 'Kalmucks', 'Asiatic' or 'barbarous'.³⁴⁹ All in all, in this period, the Western European image of Russia as a 'learner' was intertwined with perceptions of Russia as a 'threat' due to the perceived presence of barbarians and the country's religious difference.³⁵⁰ From a Western European perspective, the intersubjective encounter with Russia not only engendered the idea of a threatening Russia professing an ambiguous religion but it also contributed to mark the 'us'- 'them' dichotomy and bolster a self-understanding of Western civilization as superior.

When in the 16th century the principle of *cuius region eius religio*³⁵¹ emerged in Europe as the dominant criteria for having granted religious pluralism, relations with Russia were further complicated. Indeed, the concept of Westphalian sovereignty became the key concept for setting the criteria of legitimate actorness in Europe. This concept also set out the system of mutual recognition between national states and it symbolized the first norm on which constitutional arrangements had to be structured.³⁵²

³⁴⁸ Neumann, in Hopf, *Russia's European choice*, p.14

³⁴⁹ Neumann, *Uses of the Other. The East in European Identity Formation*, p.68-69

³⁵⁰ Orthodox Christianity is opposed to the Roman Catholic Christianity of Western Europe.

³⁵¹ A Latin phrase meaning 'whose realm, his religion', that is, the religion of the sovereign dictated the religion of the ruled.

³⁵² Haukkala, in Hopf, *Russia's European choice*, pp. 37-38

As Krasner contends the content of sovereignty is not fix but has frequently been contested (see Krasner 1993, 1999 quoted by Haukkala, in Hopf, *Russia's European choice*, p.38).

However, while in Western Europe the construction of national states gathered momentum, at the same time, Muscovy's aristocracy was still engaged in the creation of a multinational empire. In this light, once it was clear that Muscovy had failed to subscribe to the Westphalian principles of governance, the Western European perceptions of Russia as a 'threat' or 'follower' on one side, and of itself as a 'leader' on the other side, became more significant. Once again, the self-identification of Western Europe as a 'norm-maker' in the political construction of 'Europe' resulted from the intersubjective relation with Russia as a constitutive outsider.

The Enlightenment in Western Europe emphasised principles of governance and the centrality of 'reason' and 'justice' in all human activities. The emergence of liberal governance replaced the police state.³⁵³ In other words, a new paradigm for governing and defining a state became dominant. In order to emulate Western Europe, Russia was expected to become a constitutional monarchy and reject alternative paths of development different from the Western European course.³⁵⁴ Such an expectation further contributed to a representation of Western Europe as a 'norm-maker' and a more developed civilization. In addition, the fact that enlightenment principles were imbued with a significant liberal component, not only underlined even more the extent to which Russia was still far from adhering to such standards, but it also contributed to characterizing Russian practices as a menace to the social and human progress achieved in Western Europe. For example, in his 'Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow' (1790), Aleksandr Radishchev describes how Russia still censored and limited fundamental freedoms such as that of speech and the press.³⁵⁵

With the Russian revolution (1917) and the birth of the Soviet Union in the 20th century, Lenin's Bolshevik government decided to abandon the political Concert of Europe. This was a first endeavour to dislocate from a position of norm-taker / learner of Western Europe towards an emancipation of the USSR as an actor able to create a competing set of principles for the establishment of an international society opposed to the West-inspired one.³⁵⁶ In reaction to the October revolution, Westerners contributed to fuelling

Therefore, sovereignty itself is a social construct. Since Westphalia, legitimate has been associated with particular constitutional arrangements set by states. See Barkin 1998 p.230 quoted by Haukkala, in Hopf, *Russia's European choice*, pp.37-38

³⁵³ Neumann in Hopf, *Russia's European choice*, p.29

³⁵⁴ Haukkala, in Hopf, *Russia's European choice*, p.42

³⁵⁵ Wilkerson Essayist, *Imperial Russia and the Enlightenment*, 31 January 2011. Available from: <http://wilkersonessayist.wordpress.com/2011/01/31/imperial-russia-enlightenment/> Accessed 1/12/2013

³⁵⁶ Haukkala, in Hopf, *Russia's European choice*, p.45

representations of Soviet Russia as a political and potentially military ‘threat’ that plots against the West (US-West and Western Europe). The fear was that the successful revolutionary experience in Russia could spread and influence developments in Western Europe. As a consequence, Western narratives regarding the USSR started to emphasise the perverse nature of the socialist regime to such an extent that a completely different discourse, separated from the learner one, was engendered. The Soviet Union continued to be represented as the incarnation of a ‘false’ Europe but its destabilising and hostile aspects became dominant in the Western imaginary of it. For example, in his publication ‘A Short View of Russia’, the popular economist John Maynard Keynes reiterated the aggressive nature of the Russian Revolution as he explained the Russian ‘mood of oppression’ as ‘In part...fruit of Red Revolution. In part, perhaps, it is the fruit of some beastliness in the Russian nature’.³⁵⁷

In the Second World War, the USSR moved from the status of Nazi allied to the one of Nazi enemy. Before the breakout of the war, USSR’s foreign Ministry, Vyacheslav Molotov, participated in a triple alliance negotiations with Britain, France and Nazi Germany. In the negotiations with the Western powers, Molotov was accused of both delaying the talks on purpose by dwelling on irrelevant details and of abruptly terminating them in favour of an alliance with Germany, which seemed about to achieve a military success over France and Britain. Indeed, on 23 August 1939, Germany and the USSR signed a pact of non-aggression (so-called Ribbentrop–Molotov Pact) which established a neutral position by either party towards the other, in case of a military attack by a third party against one of them. Such a Soviet unclear position to carry out open negotiations with France and Britain for a pact of mutual assistance on one side, while secretly agreeing on a non-aggression pact with the Nazi against the Western powers triggered in the Western bloc the negative representation of the USSR as an unreliable actor playing a double game.³⁵⁸

During the Cold War, the Soviet military interventions in 1956 (Hungary), and 1968 (Czechoslovakia) confirmed the rhetoric of the ‘barbarousness’ of the Soviet regime and reinforced the image of the Soviet Union as a military threat. Each intervention was

³⁵⁷ E., Hardcastle, *Keynes and the Russian Revolution*, Marxists Internet Archive, 2007. Available from: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/hardcastle/keynesrussia.htm> Accessed 20/11/2013

³⁵⁸ Watson, Derek, Molotov's Apprenticeship in Foreign Policy: The Triple Alliance Negotiations in 1939, *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 52, No 4, p. 695–722

described in the Western sphere not only as a reactionary action in a particular Soviet satellite but also as examples of imperial ambition and a Soviet plot against the Western bloc. In particular, the Soviet interventions were reported in the West as a Soviet attempt to delineate its power in Europe. This gave rise to the discourse of Central Europe as ‘un occidentale kidnappé’. Each intervention was considered as an attack not only on the particular Soviet satellite, but also on ‘free’ and ‘true’ Europe.³⁵⁹ As a result, in the Western bloc there re-emerged the theme of the ‘Asiatic barbarian’ associated with the USSR, seen as a political power exploiting the privileged position offered by the Second World War to encroach on Europe through a military threat. This recalled the old Western European image of the ‘barbarian at Europe’s gate’ that was a pervasive construction of the USSR in the Western bloc during the Cold War.³⁶⁰

As such, the Western representation of Russia/USSR was gradually reshaped: the image of ‘threat’ prevailed over the description of ‘learner’. The Soviet military interventions in the satellite states could only confirm this change of representations. The image of ‘threat’ was supported by a discourse in which the USSR stood outside the ‘true’ Europe, revealing the fluctuant and instrumentalized understanding of the geographical Europe. Particularly, in the Western imaginary, the Soviet political and economic model was saddled with the same image that belonged to the Nazi enemy and was then labelled as ‘totalitarian’. Moreover, in the attempt to decrease the attractiveness of the USSR as a political alternative, the distinction between democratic and totalitarian substituted the previous main dichotomies of civilized / barbarian and European / Asian. Also, other dichotomies – free/unfree, market/plan, West/East, defensive/offensive – contributed to the perception of the USSR as the Other.³⁶¹ At the same time, this social representation of the USSR as Other served to consolidate the political identity of the West (US and Western Europe) as a superior civilization.

This first part has illustrated how the initial Western idea of Russia was that of a learner in a constant catching up process to reach Western standards. Russia was perceived as a backward country in a continued transition towards modernization. Subsequently, the defeat of the long-standing tsarist regime, the success of the October Revolution through the establishment of a new soviet regime, the military interventions in Hungary and

³⁵⁹ Neumann, *Uses of the Other*. “The East” in *European Identity Formation*, p.106

³⁶⁰ Neumann, *Uses of the Other*. “The East” in *European Identity Formation*, pp. 102-103

³⁶¹ Neumann, *Ibidem*

Czechoslovakia, all contributed to form the separated narrative representation of Russia/USSR as a 'threat' to Western Europe. Those political struggles correspond to the affirmation of a national identity and to some extent, to the building of the Western European Self. Thus the instrumentalization and the definition of Self and 'otherness' varies according to their dichotomous and differentiating representations. The idea of Russia as a constantly learning country was gradually complemented and replaced by the image of an entity that is potentially threatening and unstable because of her backward status.

However, Russia has not always been constructed as the 'learner'/'norm-taker' or 'threat' to Western Europe incapable of developing competing norms.³⁶² As opposed to these representations, the review of the Western representations of Russia presents a competing narrative field, which illustrates a Western image of Russia as a recognized equal Great Power, rising power or 'land of the future'.

This alternative and more positive representation mainly originated in the seventeenth century with Peter the Great. Following a regime-type argument, Peter's ambition to establish Western standards and the institutional compatibility between Russian autocracy and Western European monarchism enhanced the Western perception of Russia as a credible player in European politics.³⁶³ As a result, a benevolent image led to Western Europe's toleration of Russia's expansion toward the south. Similarly, as a result of the Northern War (1700-1721), Sweden had lost her supremacy as the leading power in the Baltic region and was replaced by Peter the Great's Russia. The ascendancy of Russia in 'the North' of Europe – around the Baltic Sea – was not directly characterized as a military threat to Western Europe. Russian geopolitical ambitions were not seen with the same anxiety as it was in other periods. Rather, through the military victory in the Great Northern War, Russia was viewed as having the basis for a role in the Western European diplomacy. As such, at the end of the Northern War, Russia became a central player in international society and joined France, the Habsburg Empire, and Britain as the dominant powers in Europe. Through the favourable position of the 'new' European giant, the differences related to the 'ambiguous' nature of Russian Christianity were played down.³⁶⁴ Overall, Peter's efforts to Europeanize Russia towards a Western type of governance and society

³⁶² Haukkala, in Hopf, *Russia's European Choice*

³⁶³ It can be noted that during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Western European powers tend to concede Russia the access to European politics mainly on the basis of rational criteria such as military power and status of rising great. In these considerations, Western Europeans tended to ignore cultural aspects of Russia.

³⁶⁴ Neumann, *Uses of the Other. "The East" in European Identity Formation*, p.77

contributed to the perception of Russia as belonging to the European continent and diplomacy.

Enlightenment principles such as the faith in human reason and the belief that all people can be emancipated, led many to consider Russia as having great potential to comply with standards of civilization despite her backwardness. In this respect, Malia argues that by mid 18th century Russia was considered to have acquired civilization and, thus, to have reached a status of equal partner in the 'European family of states'.³⁶⁵ Russian rulers and elites, for example, started to be educated according European principles.³⁶⁶ In the nineteenth century the representation of Russia as equal counterparts reached its apogee. The Vienna Congress in the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars left Russia as the leading power on the continent. Indeed, Russia was the enforcer and exclusive guardian of the political system in Europe – at least until the Crimean War 1854-1856 – as well as a supporter of monarchy as a central constitutive principle of sovereignty in Europe.³⁶⁷ As an equal Great Power, Russia was entitled to have spheres of influence as well as the responsibility to ensure the working of the international system.³⁶⁸ As such, Russia was accepted as a legitimate player and acted as a 'norm-maker' in the Concert of Europe.³⁶⁹ Gibbon also argued that Russia managed to eliminate her barbarous nature and joined the 'polished nations'.³⁷⁰ Moreover, a strategic narrative that represented Russia as an actor in the European Concert and potentially an ally against the Turk started to emerge.³⁷¹ As a result, Russia was included in the concert of Europe of the 19th century.

Later on in the 19th century, the reaction to the values imposed by the Enlightenment led

³⁶⁵ M. E., Malia, *Russia under Western Eyes: From the Bronze Horseman to the Lenin Mausoleum*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999, pp 23-27

³⁶⁶ Heller, in Browning, Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, p.36

³⁶⁷ Haukkala, in Hopf, *Russia's European Choice*, pp. 41-42

³⁶⁸ The discursive tension between constructions of Russia as being on the way to world hegemony vs having a legitimate right to act as a great power in and out of Europe, may recall the configuration of the strategic discourse of the Cold War. See for example Neumann, *Uses of the Other. "The East" in European Identity Formation*, Manchester University Press: Manchester. Revised version. p.13 Available from: http://www.eui.eu/RSCAS/WP-Texts/96_34.pdf Accessed 20/05/2013

³⁶⁹ Yet, two other themes of nineteenth century discourse tend to relativise this acceptance. A first revealed the tendency to view Russia as a power looking for hegemony in the manner of a 'barbarian at the gate'. Second, there was the tendency to relativise the inclusion of Russia in Europe measuring its cultural belonging to Europe by manipulating the requirement for achieving Europeaness, quoted by Neumann, *Uses of the Other. "The East" in European Identity Formation*, p.89

³⁷⁰ E., Gibbon, *General Observations on the fall of the Roman Empire in the West*, in S.N., Eisenstadt, *The Decline of Empires*, eds., Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1967, p.8, quoted by Heller, in Browning, Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, p.35-36

³⁷¹ Neumann, *Uses of the Other. "The East" in European Identity Formation*, p.74

conservatives in Western Europe to adopt an optimistic vision of Russian people described as possessors of a natural wisdom and missing that mere rationality which the Enlightenment imposed as a European and global model. In their political discourses, conservatives such as Joseph de Maistre³⁷², throughout Western Europe depicted Russia as a power, which may help Europe to find its own identity – such as the ancien régime, a monarchic and aristocratic political system - and, thus, tended to positively assess Russian geo-political objectives.³⁷³

Acts of acceptance of Russia's equality by Western Europeans also occurred at various times in the twentieth century, which was a controversial period for the Western representation of the Russia-Soviet counterpart. In fact, when in 1917 the revolutionaries overthrew the tsarist authority, Bolsheviks initially intended to rule the USSR with the firm intention to reject Western European standards and set an alternative model outside the Western-led concert. However, already at the end of 1920, the Soviets realized that the world revolution could not occur only by relying on the proletariat. In order to have a role in international society, some cooperation and engagement with the West was deemed as indispensable. This created a paradoxical situation for the Soviets that had to re-integrate into the international / Western system and, at the same time support anti-Western revolutionary ambitions, refuse the Western model and plot for its final collapse.³⁷⁴

For a number of vested interests, the Western powers accommodated the request of recognition of the Soviets. Towards the end of the First World War the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918 established German recognition of the Soviet government. Similarly, in 1922 the Treaty of Rapallo formalised Soviet-German military cooperation, further contributing to the representation of the USSR as an equal partner.³⁷⁵ In subsequent years important recognitions came from France, Britain and the US. In this respect, faced with the Nazi threat in Europe, the US first recognized the USSR in 1933 and then welcomed it to the US-sponsored League of Nations. This paved the way for the institutional access of the USSR, not only in the European political community, but also in a kind of international framework, which aimed to establish relations among parties

³⁷² King of Sardinia's representative in St. Petersburg from 1803 to 1817

³⁷³ Neumann, *Uses of the Other. "The East" in European Identity Formation*, p.93

³⁷⁴ Haukkala, in Hopf, *Russia's European Choice*, pp. 45-46

³⁷⁵ H. Haukkala, (2008), *A Historical Analysis of the Changing Parameters for Russia's Place in the Construction of the European International Society*, 2008b, Ph.D. thesis, University of Turku, Chapter 2, p. 64

in cooperative terms.³⁷⁶ For example, the League of Nations' high commissioner for refugees, Fridtjof Nansen wrote that 'Russia will one day not only deliver Europe materially, but also furnish its spiritual renewal'.³⁷⁷ Similarly, Neumann reports the existence of a marginal anthroposofist discourse promoting the idea that 'below the surface of the Soviet state there remained a spiritual Russia',³⁷⁸ with ambitions to enrich humanity. Here, the themes of 'Russia as the land of the future' with a 'great potential' as well as the anthroposofist narrative of Russia with a 'natural wisdom' is at play. Similarly, Western European intellectuals appreciated the creation of the Soviet system as a turning point towards the universal process of modernization. In particular, Ludwig Wittgenstein often expressed his intention to move to the Soviet Union, which he thought was a harsh but just system.³⁷⁹ He also welcomed the idea of a classless society and proclaimed that the USSR was a valid alternative to capitalism.³⁸⁰ Before his disappointing visit, Andre Gide considered the USSR as an 'an unprecedented experiment' capable of 'sweeping along the whole humanity'. His appreciation towards the USSR was so high that he declared: 'if my life were necessary to assure the success of the Soviet Union I would gladly give it immediately'.³⁸¹ In his work 'Le Couteau entre les dents' in 1921, Henri Barbusse defined the birth of Soviet Russia as the 'greatest and most beautiful phenomenon in world history. This fact brings humanity to a new phase in its development'.³⁸²

Neumann notes that during the inter-war period an interesting construction of Russia was also put forward by Carl Schmitt. Although not strictly positive in its tone, Schmitt argued that 'We in Mitteleuropa live sous l'oeil des Russes' (under Russia's eye), and that Russia was 'a state which is more, and more intensely, statist [staatlich] than any state ruled by an absolute monarch'. However, Schmitt also added that Russia could be considered as Europe's radical brother, who interpreted the European nineteenth century

³⁷⁶ Haukkala, Ibidem

³⁷⁷ Neumann, *Uses of the Other. "The East" in European Identity Formation*, p.100

³⁷⁸ Neumann, *Uses of the Other. "The East" in European Identity Formation*, p.106

³⁷⁹ A., Rosselli, (2007), *Intellettuali e Comunismo*, Area. Storia Libera, 2007, Available from: http://www.storialibera.it/epoca_contemporanea/comunismo_italiano/egemonia_culturale/articolo.php?id=2855 Accessed 27/06/2013

³⁸⁰ V., Morozov, Western Hegemony, Global Democracy and the Russian Challenge in Browning and Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, p. 191

³⁸¹ E., Starkie, André Gide, in E., Starkie, eds., *The God That Failed: Six Studies in Communism*, London: Hamish Hamilton, 1950, p. 176

See also A., Brown, *The Rise and Fall of Communism*, London: Bodley Head and Random House, 2009

³⁸² H. Barbusse, *Le Couteau entre les dents*, 1921, p.44

his own way.³⁸³ Importantly, along with the idea that Russia's present should be Europe's future, Schmitt's representation of Russia emphasised the state as a central element in Russian culture.

With the advent of the Cold War, despite the revival of negative images of the USSR as the new opponent undermining world stability, the contribution of the USSR to the defeat of the common Nazi enemy could not be overlooked. Along with the US, the USSR was then recognized as the Great Power responsible for the future post-war settlement and as such participating as a necessary player in the exclusive conferences of Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam. This brought the US to identify the USSR as the pivotal interlocutor that had to be addressed to set the constitutive principle of sovereignty globally. In other words, as perceived by the Western side, the USSR acquired again the role of norm-maker of the post-war order.³⁸⁴

Other favourable descriptions persisted even during the Cold War as a notable defection to the dominant vision of the USSR as the Western enemy. In fact, the alternative interpretation in Western Europe was that of a USSR representing not only the 'liberator of Europe from Nazism', but also a model for Western Europe to follow, a politico-economic model more advanced than capitalism. Although this was an ideal celebration not based on its actual performance, the Soviet model was viewed as endowed with an evolutionary potential on Europe.³⁸⁵ In 1954, following a visit to the Soviet Union, the French philosopher Jean Paul Sartre declared that 'there is a total freedom of criticism in the USSR'.³⁸⁶ In opposition to the construction of the USSR as a threat and undemocratic, Sartre not only depicted the USSR as a harmless entity but also as a model for Western Europe: 'I have looked, but I just cannot find any evidence of an aggressive impulse on the part of the Russians in the last three decades'. '[The Soviet citizen] criticizes [the régime] more frequently and more effectively than us'.³⁸⁷ Other writers such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Bertolt Brecht supported Stalin and the

³⁸³ C., Schmitt, *Der begriff des politischen: Text von 1932 mit einem vorwort und dei Collarien*, Berlin: Dunker and Humblot, 1963, pp.79-80, quoted by Neumann, *Uses of the Other. "The East" in European Identity Formation*, pp. 101-102

³⁸⁴ See for example Haukkala, in Hopf, *Russia's European Choice*, p. 47

³⁸⁵ Neumann, *Uses of the Other. "The East" in European Identity Formation*, p. 104-105

³⁸⁶ R., Kimball, Sartre resartus, A review of Annie Cohen-Solal's Sartre biography, *The New Criterion*, Vol. 5 May 1987. Available from: <http://www.newcriterion.com/articles.cfm/Sartre-resartus-6201>
Accessed 20/07/2013

³⁸⁷ Neumann, *Uses of the Other. "The East" in European Identity Formation*, p.104

Soviet Union showing faith in the construction of socialism.³⁸⁸ Similarly, in his 'Humanism and Terror' in 1946, Maurice Merleau-Ponty defended the Soviet Communism.³⁸⁹

On the political level, the treaty signed in August 1970 between the USSR and West German governments that sanctioned the exclusion of the use of force as an option to settle disputes as well as the agreement on a mutual diplomatic recognition between the West and East Germany signed in 1973³⁹⁰ contributed to further decrease political tensions and further confirmed Western recognition of the Soviet experiment.

Generally, it can be said that one of the differences between these various narrative representations ('equal power' 'learner', 'threat', 'land of the future') is the extent to which Russia is either viewed as a 'normal' Great Power (i.e. status quo oriented and accepting of the overall system) or alternatively as a revolutionary power seeking radical systemic change.

The post-Cold War period re-proposes such a dichotomy especially in the Western European interpretations of Russia, which is either seen as a partner or as a revisionist or aggressive state.

6 Western Representations of New Russia in the Post-Cold War Period

Mutual representations between the West and Russia have fluctuated since the end of the Cold War.

As explained in the section on Russia's identity, in the last phase of the Cold War the Soviet initiative to end the Cold War was made through the request to 'join Europe' in the slogan of the Common European Home. However, different were the Western European interpretations of this landmark Soviet transformation. These varied from suspicion on the necessity of this Soviet move, to claims that the USSR was 'in Europe

³⁸⁸ D., Kellner, *Brecht's Marxist Aesthetic*, Illuminations, University of Texas at Arlington. Available from: <http://www.uta.edu/huma/illuminations/kell3.htm> Accessed 20/07/2013

³⁸⁹ S., Žižek, *Robespierre or the "Divine Violence" of Terror*, Lacan.com/EBSCO Publishing, Inc. Available from: <http://www.lacan.com/zizrobes.htm> Accessed 20/07/ 2013

³⁹⁰ B., Schäfer, *The East German State and the Catholic Church, 1945-1989*, US: Berghahn Books, 2010, p.176

but not of Europe', to wariness that the Soviet strategy was to decouple Western Europe from the US.³⁹¹ Gorbachev's proposal to eliminate nuclear weapons in the world epitomized inconsistency in the views of Western European leaders who reacted with a certain degree of caution and skepticism but they also expressed interest and hopes in the Soviet leader. Dutch Foreign Ministry spokesman Gonker Roelants said:

'We welcome his plan and we'll study it within the alliance, but it can be evaluated only after details are presented in a more definite form by the Soviets in Geneva...Gorbachev wants to convince us he's a peacemaker, always at the forefront with new proposals, but I think we're sophisticated enough to see behind his smile'.³⁹²

A British Foreign Office official said 'It (the proposal) contains some quite attractive new ideas with some tricky conditions'.³⁹³ Stephane Chmielewsky, a spokesman on Soviet affairs in the French Ministry of External Relations said 'We aren't impressed. It is much more a propaganda exercise'.³⁹⁴

Despite these varieties of reactions, internal development in Russia resulting from the Gorbachevian pro-Western narrative seemed to be welcomed in the West. Western powers quickly recognized and expressed their support to the new Russia and to its presidents (Gorbachev-Yeltsin). As a consequence, the new Russia was enabled to occupy all the positions of the former USSR in international organizations and in all the treaties. Western media even regarded Gorbachev as a hero of the twentieth century, who contributed to the end of the Cold War.³⁹⁵ In particular, some of the largest countries in Western Europe (e.g. UK) reacted positively to Gorbachev's main reforms and innovations in Soviet foreign policy. In a letter to Mitterand on her return from a

³⁹¹ G., Nonnenmacher, *Gorbachev's Message for Europe: a Dangerous, Phoney Methapor*, The German Tribune, 15/03/ 1987. Translated from Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 9 March, quoted by Neumann, *Uses of the Other. "The East" in European Identity Formation* p.102

As the next chapter will demonstrate, some of these themes (e.g. divide and rule) will re-emerge in the EU's perception of Russia as a country trying to split MSs by developing energy relations on bilateral basis rather than with the EU.

³⁹² T., Marshall, *Western Europe Cautious, Skeptical but Hopeful on Gorbachev Arms Proposal*, Los Angeles Times, 21 January 1986. Available from: http://articles.latimes.com/1986-01-21/news/mn-31160_1_arms-control Accessed 03/08/ 2013

³⁹³ Marshall, Ibidem

³⁹⁴ Marshall, Ibidem

³⁹⁵ R., Cohen, *Gorbachev is Europe's New Hero*, Boca Raton News, 14 June 1987. Available from: <http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1291&dat=19870614&id=KU9UAAAIBAJ&sjid=pY0DAAAIBAJ&pg=4691.3603009> Accessed 03/08/2013

meeting with Gorbachev, Prime Minister Thatcher commented that 'it is in our interest to favourably welcome his [Gorbachev's] effort and to encourage him in the direction in which he has engaged himself'. As soon as it became clear that Gorbachev was in favour of a European dimension of the USSR and urged cooperation between the two 'Europes' (Russia and Western Europe), Thatcher unconditionally supported perestroika and the disarmament talks between the US and the USSR.³⁹⁶

As a result of the pro-Western stance, the new Russian Federation became the first Russian state based on liberal democratic norms. In particular, together with the new states of the former USSR, the Russian Federation pledged to implement the principles agreed with the Western states at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) held in Helsinki in 1975.³⁹⁷ As a result, the 'immutability of [Russia's] democratic foundations' is asserted in the preamble to the Constitution which also states that Russia's sovereignty and the Russian Federation are characterized as a 'democratic federative rule-of-law state with a republican form of government'.³⁹⁸ Subsequent articles endorse a free market economy and associate democracy with the protection of the rights of the individual.³⁹⁹ It is worth noting here that similarly to what occurred at the time of the pro-Western orientation of Peter the Great, these favourable developments in Russia enhanced the Western representation of the new Russia.

Similarly to the early 1990s, in the aftermath of 9/11, the relationship between the 'West' and Russia was enhanced with claims about shared interests, identities and a definite end of the Cold War legacies. In particular the EU and Russia found common ground for cooperation in fighting threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts. As a Joint Statement issued in 2002 reports 'We declare that we stay united in the fight against terrorism with due regard for the rule of law, for democratic principles, and for the territorial integrity of states'.⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁶ B., Bozo, M. P., Rey, N. P., Ludlow, and L., Nuti, *Europe and the End of the Cold War: A Reappraisal*, Oxon: Routledge, 2008, pp 23-28

³⁹⁷ US Department of State Dispatch Supplement, Implementation of the Helsinki Final Act, September 1992, Vol.3, No.6

With a to improve relations between the Soviet bloc and the West, the Helsinki Accords included principles such as respect for sovereign equality, peaceful settlement of disputes, respect for human rights and fundamental freedom etc.

³⁹⁸ Ortmann, *Re-imagining Westphalia: identity in IR and the Construction of the Russian State*

³⁹⁹ See Section 2 on 'Human Rights and Individual Freedom', quoted by Ortmann, *Re-imagining Westphalia: identity in IR and the Construction of the Russian State*

⁴⁰⁰ Council of the European Union, EU-Russia Summit. Joint Statement on the Fight Against Terrorism, Press Release, 11 November 2002. Available from: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/en/74448.pdf Accessed 13/07/2013

However, the post-Cold War period was also characterized by signs of tension in many instances: Chechnya (1994-1996 and 1999-2000⁴⁰¹), Georgia (2008)⁴⁰², issues related to energy⁴⁰³, human rights, and EU foreign policy towards the common 'near abroad'.⁴⁰⁴ In these cases, Russia's brutal behavior not only fuelled talk about a 'new cold war'⁴⁰⁵ with the West, but it also impacted on the Western representation of Russia as a violent and rebellious country that still adheres to the traditional realist understanding of international politics as a zero-sum game among Great Powers and that resorts to military intervention to pursue interests in its own sphere of influence.

In the second conflict in Chechnya, a number of Western European countries signed a Motion for a Resolution and offered it in the Council of Europe:

'The Assembly...is deeply concerned by Russia's military action in Chechnya. It considers that, although the conflict between Chechnya and... Russian Federation is an internal matter, the means employed by these authorities violate Russia's internal obligations, including the commitments entered into upon accession to the Council of Europe...The Assembly condemns the indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force by Russian military which has reportedly led to hundreds of civilian casualties in Chechnya.'⁴⁰⁶

In the Georgian war in 2008, as a reaction to Russia's continued violation of the ceasefire agreement, the French President, Nicolas Sarkozy, that held the EU

⁴⁰¹ The military phase of the second Chechen war was 1999-2000 but the insurgency lasted through most of Putin's presidencies

⁴⁰² For Georgia see also: A., Blomfield, *Russia 'Ready for new Cold War' Over Georgia*, The Telegraph, 27 August 2008. Available from: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/georgia/2629981/Russia-ready-for-new-Cold-War-over-Georgia.html> Accessed 1/13/2013

⁴⁰³ For energy, see also: M., Almond, *A Capitalist Revolution*, The Guardian, 7 January 2009. Available from: <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/jan/07/gazprom-oil-russia> Accessed 1/13/2013

⁴⁰⁴ Shevtsova, Lilia, *Putin's Russia*, Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005, pp.316-317

⁴⁰⁵ E., Lucas, *The New Cold War: How the Kremlin Menaces both Russia and the West*, London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2008

⁴⁰⁶ Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, Conflict in Chechnya. Motion for a Resolution. Strasbourg, 27 October 1999. Available from: <http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/XrefViewHTML.asp?FileID=8793&Language=EN> Accessed 28/2/2013
Although informed of the brutality of Russian aggression, the signatories Western European countries adopted a cautious stance since they considered Yeltsin's government as the guarantor of Moscow's pro-Western stance.

presidency, pushed the EU leaders to ‘seriously examine relations’ and deliver a ‘clear and united message’ to Moscow. He added that ‘Russia's attachment to a relationship of understanding and cooperation with the rest of Europe is in question’.⁴⁰⁷ Similarly, Gordon Brown, the then UK Prime Minister, said that ‘root and branch’ review of Europe's relations with Russia was needed. In particular, he proposed to ‘exclude Russia from the G8 and review Russia’s ties with NATO’. He also called for plans to achieve energy independence from Moscow.⁴⁰⁸

In this respect, tensions over energy policy provide further evidence of the EU’s tendency to exclude the Russian threat from the ‘true’ Europe. For example, as a condition to start discussion on gas price, Russian Energy Minister, Alexander Novak, warned Moldova – which had asked Gazprom for a 30% decrease in gas prices – to ‘renounce the protocol on entering the Europe Energy Community agreement’.⁴⁰⁹ As a reaction, Günther Oettinger, the European Commissioner for energy accused Russia of ‘pure blackmail’, of playing a ‘divide-and-rule’ game, and labeled Russia’s behaviour towards Moldova as ‘unacceptable’. As such, MSs were asked to stand by Moldova in a confrontation with Russia over its energy supply and to adopt ‘a strong common approach’ to reject Russia's threats. This also fuelled the image of Russia as a mistrustful/untrustworthy actor: ‘if you [Russia] work with these measures... then we can't trust you for your long term security of supply’.⁴¹⁰

Furthermore, in the post-Cold War phase, the West and in particular the EU have often criticised Russia for her negative record on basic rights of a democracy. This implied a depiction of the Russian regime as authoritarian and backward. In this respect, the European Parliament has questioned Russia's legal system in a resolution that criticizes the lack of freedom of expression and assembly in Russia. The resolution expresses concern about the ‘recent repressive laws and their arbitrary enforcement by the Russian

⁴⁰⁷ J., Swaine, *Georgia: EU leader set to condemn Russia*, The Telegraph, 1, September 2008. Available from: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/georgia/2659810/Georgia-EU-leaders-set-to-condemn-Russia.html> Accessed 13/07/ 2013

⁴⁰⁸ Swaine, Ibidem

⁴⁰⁹ It is important to note that Russia opposes the Energy Community, an international organization backed by the EU. Moldova and Ukraine were in the process of align their energy rules with those of the Energy Community.

⁴¹⁰ D., Keating, *Commissioner Urges EU to Face Down Russia on Energy*, The European Voice, 11/10/2012. Available from: <http://www.europeanvoice.com/CWS/Index.aspx?PageID=188&articleID=75339> Accessed 01/08/2013

authorities.’ The resolution also stressed worries about the State Duma’s law banning ‘homosexual propaganda.’⁴¹¹

The political scenario in the common ‘near abroad’ is a further cause of tension since the EU and Russia implement neighborhood policies through which they are mutually ‘othering’ each other.⁴¹² In view of the 2004 Eastern enlargement, the EU launched the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) to support political stability and closer relationships with its new neighbors.⁴¹³ A precursor of the ENP was published in March 2003 under the title ‘Wider Europe Neighbourhood’. One of the aim of the neighborhood policy of the EU is to promote EU’s internal security through regulatory approximation towards the EU. Russia was also offered to become an ENP partner but refused to be treated as a ‘simple’ EU’s neighbor. Rather, Russia perceives itself as an equal partner to the EU and as the Eastern pole of attraction in the common European neighborhood.⁴¹⁴ Similarly, the Eastern Partnership launched in 2009, intended to strengthen the relations between the EU and its eastern European partners such as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Through the Partnership the EU intends to support its neighbours in their political, institutional and economic reforms based on Western standards of democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, commitment to market economy, sustainable development and good governance.⁴¹⁵ While through the ENP, the EU’s othering of Russia unfolds by denying it an inter-subjective interaction with the EU, the Eastern Partnership represent the EU’s strategy of ‘region-building’ where Russia is excluded from the construction of the region, and as a consequence, excluded from the political construction of Europe.

⁴¹¹ Radio Free Europe - Radio Liberty, *EU Lawmakers Concerned about Repression in Russia*, 13 June 2013. Available from: <http://www.rferl.org/content/eu-concern-russia-repression/25016388.html> Accessed 03/08/2013

⁴¹² Makarychev, Andrey, *Russia-EU: Competing Logics of Region Building*, DGAP, March 2012, p.1

⁴¹³ Originally, the ENP included the following neighbours : Algeria, Belarus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine. Later it was extended to the states of the Southern Caucasus : Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. See the EC Website, *European Neighbourhood Policy*. See European Union Website, *European Neighbourhood Policy*. Available from : http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/ext-dimension/neighbourhood/index_en.htm Accessed 3/3/2013

Russia – that was originally included in the ENP – rejected the assumption to be considered as one among many Eastern states. Claims were instead made in favour of recognition of equality with the EU.

⁴¹⁴ Michael Emerson, Gergana Noutcheva and Nicu Popescu, *European Neighbourhood Policy Two Years on: Time indeed for an ‘ENP Plus’*, CEPS, March 2007, p.25

⁴¹⁵ European External Action Service, *The Eastern Partnership. The European Union and Eastern Europe*. Available from: http://eeas.europa.eu/eastern/docs/eap_vilnius_ppt_201113_en.pdf Accessed 5/8/2014

By the same token, Russia also aims to strengthen its control and achieve a political and security monopoly in those countries located in the ‘near-abroad’ – which Russia still consider as belonging to its sphere of influence in Europe – and, thus it rejects any role for Western institutions.⁴¹⁶ For example, Russia stressed that the EU’s strategy of political convergence could trigger the creation of dividing lines in the ex-Soviet space. In this context, Deputy Foreign Minister Chizov highlighted the risk of a ‘counterproductive’ intrusion in the ‘common abroad’.⁴¹⁷

Another source of concern in the EU came from Putin’s recent plans for the formation of a Eurasian Economic Union⁴¹⁸ and a Eurasian Union.⁴¹⁹ EU leaders have depicted these as inappropriate and confrontational projects. For example, in replying to a parliamentary question on cooperation between the EU and the Eurasian Union, Catherine Asthon, High Representative of the EU said: ‘Given the economic orientation of the Eurasian Economic Commission as well as the Eurasian Economic Union, it would not provide the appropriate framework or be the appropriate partner for bringing about political reforms in Belarus.’⁴²⁰ Moreover, by outlining the priorities of the EU in its neighborhood, Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy, Štefan Füle, referred to the Eurasian Union as a ‘significant challenge.’⁴²¹ Through these claims, the EU leaders have re-proposed the Cold War dichotomy between the true / legitimate Western experiment opposed to the false / illegitimate Soviet one.

Overall, it can be said that in the post-Cold War phase, Western European representations of Russia have fluctuated. Russia was either represented as a new partner in international politics (e.g. fight against terrorism) imbued with renewed pro-

⁴¹⁶ Makarychev, *Russia-EU: Competing Logics of Region Building*, p.1

⁴¹⁷ D., Averre, Russia and the European Union: Convergence or Divergence?, *European Security*, Vol.14, No. 2, June 2005, p. 179

⁴¹⁸ On 29 May 2014, Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan signed an agreement establishing the Eurasian Economic Union which aims to create a territory for unified customs tariffs beginning on January 2015.

⁴¹⁹ In Putin’s vision the Eurasian Economic Union is the first step for the creation of a broader Eurasian Union, a supra-national union of sovereign states seen as a political alternative to the EU.

⁴²⁰ C., Asthon, Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission, European Parliament, Question N. E-007665/2012, 16 October 2012. Available from: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-007665&language=EN> Accessed 05/08/2013

⁴²¹ Commissioner Štefan Füle, European Neighbourhood Policy – Priorities and Directions for Change, Press Release SPEECH, 25 July 2013. Available from: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-661_en.htm Accessed 02/08/2013

Western spirit after decades of torpor, or as a rebel outsider of Europe that still resorts to military intervention and blackmail as foreign policy tools.

7 Conclusion

As stated in previous chapters, the overall aim of this thesis is to build a discursive structure to explain EU-Russia energy relations. To this purpose, this chapter presented an historical overview of the narratives existing respectively in Russia in relation to the West and Europe, and the narratives existing in Western Europe/West in relation to Russia. In methodological terms, this discussion contributed to establish the historical representations available to the Self to describe the Other (e.g. threat, intrusive, learner, norm-maker/norm-taker/ developed/underdeveloped, equal partner). This constructs the kinds of ‘otherness’ that can occur in a continuum that goes from a radical confrontation to cooperation (e.g. ‘degree of Otherness’). The detection of the mutual and historical narratives used by actors (Self / Other) in their mutual relations serves as a basis to analyse, in the following chapters, how elements of these narratives emerge in the energy policy paradigms in the EU and Russia (layer two).

Starting from the 19th century debate, Russian thinkers have intensely debated the dilemma on where to locate the concept of the ‘West’ in Russia’s identity. As a result, the discursive representations of Russia’s identity came to pertain to the three broad narrative fields of exceptionalism, westernism and pragmatic statism, which alternated throughout history and, as demonstrated, expand in other sub-narratives. As a result, Western Europe is constructed as an intrusive and threatening entity, the ‘equal partner’ or the ‘model’.

Similarly, the second section illustrated the narratives through which Western Europeans have represented Western Europe in relation to Russia. Western Europe/EU relies on the following basic narratives for its self-representation: ‘Europeanization’, ‘Civilian Empire’ and ‘Concert of Europe’. As a result, Russia is constructed as a ‘learner’, ‘threat’, ‘equal partner’ or as the ‘land of the future.’

For each of these narratives there is a corresponding view of ‘Europe’ that can be ascribable to the binary distinction between true/false Europe recurrent on both sides.

Importantly, broader narratives and sub-narratives should not be seen as separated. A number of common themes – superiority, sense of mission, cooperation – are reflected in both. As such, although claiming different paths of development, the narratives detected are intertwined and present common themes. First of all, in putting forward their arguments, these narratives have constantly reinforced claims to superiority. As such, in developing their conceptual apparatus, exceptionalist narratives have assigned – from time to time – superiority to the Russian, Slav and Eurasian civilization. Similarly, by indicating the Western path as the model to follow for modernization and by denying Russia's unique character, Westernisers in Russia implicitly claimed the superiority of Western civilization.

On the Western side, by describing Russia as a 'learner' and in a continued transition towards modernization, the West was automatically conceiving itself as a superior civilization. Secondly, stemming from the feeling of being a superior civilization, the exceptionalist narratives – such as Slavophilism and Panslavism – supported the idea of embracing and absorbing other ethnic groups (e.g. Slavs) under a single umbrella. This seems to recall the constitutive element of Westernization / Europeanization ideology, which aims to interfere in and assimilate other civilizations and states by introducing Western standards.

In addition, the key concept of cooperation is another recurring theme that can be found not only in Russian Westernism but also in the neo-Eurasian doctrine and in the West. In particular, although being an exceptionalist narrative, neo-Eurasianism comes to accept cooperation with those countries located in Western Europe on condition that they hold an anti-Western orientation. Similarly, in specific phases of history, the West has recognized Russia as an equal partner belonging to international society and with whom cooperation is possible.

Furthermore, as debate evolved, the messianic principle proved to be a further common feature. Starting from Slavophilism, exceptionalist narratives came to believe that Russia had been assigned a holy mission to rescue the world from the collapse triggered by Western civilization. The aim was to replace the Western principles in what was depicted as an evangelic mission to transfer Russian culture to the declining West and globally. This objective recalls the sense of mission that Peter the Great and the early Westernisers had to westernize Russia through the introduction of Western principles. Likewise, the belief in the universal goodness of its standards and the need to spread

them has been often implemented as a leading narrative of the Western civilization (e.g. Westernisation). As embodiment of the Western values, the EU's foreign policy (especially with its neighbourhood in the context of the ENP) has also claimed to pursue a mission to spread its own standards throughout the world.

Drawing from this last point, Westernisation/Europeanisation on one side and exceptionalism on the other side have one thing in common: they are two different reactions to two competing strategies of dealing with globalisation. On one side, through the 'bureaucratic imperialism' grounded in traditional readings of 'Westernness' as synonym of goodness, the EU aims to project its internal order. On the other side, through the promotion of the 'sovereign democracy' and a strategy of bureaucratic centralization, Russia aims to protect internal order.⁴²² Recent examples pertaining to EU-Russia relations can elucidate this idea. Faced with the EU's intention to interfere in its affairs, Putin's Russia restricted Western dialogue with civil society in Russia, as seen in the NGO law as well as in the restriction for Western companies to access key oil and gas reserves such as Shtokman and Sakhalin-2. On the contrary, through Europeanisation, the EU wants to minimise the ambiguity of its external environment (e.g. Ukraine, Russia, energy security) by extending its own *acquis*. This kind of 'bureaucratic imperialism' is manifest in policies such as the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCA), the Common Strategy on Russia, the Energy Charter, the Road Map for the EU-Russian Common Spaces and the ENP (which Russia did not sign).⁴²³

The next chapter will narrow down the focus to EU-Russia energy relations. In particular, the aim will be to map the energy paradigms of the EU and Russia and on this basis, to demonstrate how elements and themes of the narratives detected in this chapter (layer one) are reflected in the EU's and Russian energy paradigms.

⁴²² S., Medvedev, *The Stalemate in EU-Russia Relations: Between 'Sovereignty' and 'Europeanization'*, in Hopf, *Russia's European choice*, pp. 225-226. See also T., Hopf, Introduction, in Hopf, *Russia's European choice*, pp. 9-10

⁴²³ Medvedev, in Hopf, *Russia's European choice*, pp. 220-221

This idea of exporting internal law standards to other countries, especially neighbours, recalls the theory of 'analogia domestica'.

Chapter 4 - Building Layer Two: Framing EU's and Russian Energy Paradigms

1 Introduction

According to Ole Wæver, the understanding of a discursive structure relies on abstraction and ‘sedimentation’. As noted, ‘sedimentation’ indicates how deeply rooted a discursive structure is.⁴²⁴ In this context, abstract paradigms add specificity to the deepest level of ‘sedimentation’ (e.g. narratives), and thus, they further contribute to codify the discursive structure as a whole.

With regard to terminology, it is here useful to recall that this thesis assumes discourses as ‘sedimented’ in three layers: narrative/story, paradigm, and discursive practice. A narrative/story refers to a specific interpretation of an event that emerges from a specific ordering and selection of historical facts in a way that produces a unified meaning. A paradigm refers to a set of ideas and norms that define a way of viewing a specific policy field (e.g. energy). The term discursive practice indicates the actual expression of a thought (in written or spoken form) or a symbolic action.

Based on this distinction, this research proposes to build a three-layered structure with a view to identifying the discursive framework of EU-Russia energy relations. The previous chapter (layer one) investigated the mutual narrative/story through which the West / Western Europe and Russia have represented themselves. From such an investigation, a variety of narratives have emerged. On one side, the West / Western Europe narrated Russia as a ‘learner’, a ‘threat’, an ‘equal great power’ with the potential of being a ‘land of the future’. On the other side, Russia represented the Western civilization either as model or as hindrance to its unique civilization. Each of these representations has implications for Russia’s and Western Europe’s political project of ‘Europe’.

This chapter scales down the layered structure to investigate the second level of ‘sedimentation’ (or layer two) which focuses on the policy field. Given that the policy field of this thesis is energy, layer two constructs energy paradigms of the EU and Russia. In particular, the construction of layer two involves two main aims: (i) investigate how the EU and Russia have constituted their energy paradigms, (ii) to analyze the extent to which the historical narratives and representations of layer one are reflected in the mutual energy relations between the EU and Russia. Layer three (next

⁴²⁴ P., Drulak, *Metaphors Europe Lives by: Language and Institutional Change of the European Union*, Badia Fiesolana - San Domenico (Florence): European University Institute, 2004, p. 5

chapters) will examine how the discursive structure made up of layer one (historical representations of the Other) and layer two (energy paradigms) is played out in the debates over the Nabucco / South Stream pipeline competition and in the EU-Russia ED.

Ultimately, this research aims to demonstrate that confrontation and cooperation in the energy relations between the EU and Russia can be better understood by looking at the relationship as a Self / Other discursive interaction and, thus, through the concept of ‘otherness’.

In order to build layer two, this chapter constructs two competing energy security paradigms – Market and Institutions (MI) and Regions and Empire (RE) and shows how they have been constructed and how they are used at different times by the EU and Russia. In short, in the RE paradigm, energy security can be achieved by applying a geopolitical logic (neorealist approach) whereas in a MI paradigm, the neoliberal principles of cooperation and interdependence ensure energy security.

The construction of EU’s and Russia’s energy paradigms is presented as a result of the discursive contestation occurring (i) within the internal borders and (ii) with the counter-part (the Other). In many instances both the EU and Russia have switched between a neorealist and neoliberal paradigm of energy security. As such, by pursuing their goals in the energy field, the EC⁴²⁵ seems to mobilize support to the rules of fair competition and market liberalization, while Russia appears set on state energy governance. However, the internal discourse of the EC changes when it comes to the external energy dimension where official discourses reveal a geopolitical tone lying behind its public rhetoric. Similarly, Russia has often been perceived as adhering to a state-centric model in its energy paradigm. Yet, it will be illustrated that during the Soviet time and in the post-Soviet period (especially under President Yeltsin), a market-oriented series of reforms and actions were undertaken in the energy sector. These were mainly inspired by external factors (a globally dominant ‘westernizing’ discourse in the post-Cold War period). Overall, this alternation demonstrated how the EU and Russia have constructed their ‘energy identity’ around both the MI and RE paradigms.

As noted in the methodology chapter, the political characterization of an identity relies

⁴²⁵ To avoid confusion, the European Economic Community is abbreviated as (EEC), while the European Commission as (EC).

on its identification through three dimensions: spatial, (how boundaries between Self/Other are drawn), temporal (how temporal schemes such as ‘development’, ‘continuity’, ‘change,’ ‘stasis’ or ‘repetition’ occur) and ethical (how actors construct their responsibility and sense of mission). Similarly, this chapter aims to investigate how the EU and Russia have constructed their ‘energy identity’ through drawing boundaries with the Other in the European space, through temporal schemes, and through their ethical understanding of energy security as a ‘mission.’

This chapter is structured in the following way to achieve its aims. The next section draws from IR theory to outline two competing energy security paradigms (MI and RE). Section two examines how the EU and Russia have constructed their approach to energy around the MI and RE paradigms. It demonstrates how the construction of energy paradigms emerges from the discursive contestation within the internal borders and with the counter-part (the Other). The analysis also illustrates how the establishment of an energy paradigm as dominant, emerges through social antagonism among competing paradigms. It also sheds light on the constitutive role of Other in shaping the ‘energy identity’ of the Self.

The conclusion draws out the implications of layer two in the context of the three-layered discursive structure. It also sets the ground for the construction of layer three, which, as said, aims to explain the Nabucco/South Stream pipeline and the EU-Russia ED through the mutual historical representations (layer one) and energy paradigms (layer two) of the parties.

Finally, it is worth noting that throughout the chapter, concepts such as ‘energy policy’, ‘energy sector’, ‘energy cooperation’, etc. refer to oil and gas, unless and when otherwise is specified. In addition, in compliance with the methodology of this thesis, the present examination is based upon information from a number of sources, including official policy documents, official and business reports, economic and political science journals.

2 Energy Security Paradigms

Explaining energy security acquired significance since the energy shocks of the 1970s,

when oil producing countries provoked shortages in consumer countries, demonstrating, at the same time, the imbalance between the geographical distribution of resources on one side, and energy consumers on the other. Since then, IR analysts have examined energy security extensively.

The existing literature stresses how energy security has different levels of analysis. In most instances, energy security is examined through a state's perspective (e.g. Russian and the US' energy security), or by taking into account the supranational level (e.g. the EU) and regional levels (energy security in the post-Soviet region)⁴²⁶.

This chapter mainly focuses on the neorealist and neoliberal literature on energy security⁴²⁷ to structure two opposite energy security paradigms – 'Regions and Empires' and 'Market and Institutions'.

In particular, neo-realist and neo-liberalist theories represent the dominant energy paradigms that explain how best to achieve energy security.⁴²⁸

They offer contending understandings of energy security: the first has an economic and market-based connotation while the second emphasizes the geopolitical element. In line with this general divide, energy models of governance can follow a geopolitical or economic logic.

Neo-realism attributes to energy a strategic value beyond its market price. From this perspective energy security is a zero-sum game involving a cooperation-conflict relationship.⁴²⁹ The liberal perspective proposes a market-oriented approach and conceives energy as a globally tradable good.⁴³⁰ These two approaches – the realist

⁴²⁶ Shadrina, E., *Russia's Foreign Energy Policy: Norm, Ideas and Driving Dynamics*, Turku: Electronic Publications of Pan-European Institute, 2010, p. 28. Available from: http://www.utu.fi/fi/yksikot/tse/yksikot/PEI/raportit-ja-tietopakettit/Documents/Shadrina_final_netiti.pdf Accessed 15/09/2012

⁴²⁷ See in particular Aad, C., and Van Der Linde, C., Energy Supply Security and Geopolitics: A European Perspective. *Energy Policy*, Vol. 34, No. 5, 2006, pp 532-543

⁴²⁸ Luft, G., and Korin, A., Realism and Idealism in the Energy Security Debate, in Luft, G., and Korin, A., *Energy Security Challenges in the 21st Century. A Reference Handbook*, eds., Santa Barbara (USA): Greenwood Publishing Group ABC-CLIO, 2009, p. 340, quoted by Shadrina, *Russia's Foreign Energy Policy: Norm, Ideas and Driving Dynamics*, p.28

⁴²⁹ Campbell, D., The Biopolitics of Security: Oil, Empire and the Sports Utility Vehicle, *American Quarterly*, Vol. 57. No. 3 2005, pp. 943–972

See also Klare, M., *Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet. How Scarce Energy is Creating a New World Order*, Oxford: One World Publications, 2008, quoted by Shadrina, *Russia's Foreign Energy Policy: Norm, Ideas and Driving Dynamics*, p.28

⁴³⁰ Stanislaw, J., A., Power Play – Resource Nationalism, The Global Scramble for Energy, and the Need for Mutual Interdependence, Deloitte Centre for Energy Solutions, 2008, p. 9 quoted by Shadrina, *Russia's Foreign Energy Policy: Norm, Ideas and Driving Dynamics*, p. 28

‘securitization’ and the liberal ‘commodification’ – are not mutually exclusive. In fact, different paradigms can be combined and alternate.

To understand the reason for this alternation, it is important to recall a methodological point. As noted in Chapter 2, this thesis conceptualizes discourses (even hegemonic ones) as socially constructed. It follows that the meaning and the language of each discourse are essential unstable and subject to change. As a result, the objective meaning of a discourse can never be fully accomplished. No discourse is fully closed, but it is continually challenged and re-articulated through interaction and struggle with other discourses to reach hegemony, that is, to establish a specific meaning of language.⁴³¹ This enables the existence of multiple and competing discourses.

2.1 The (Neo)realist Approach

Realism represents mainstream IR theory as it draws its theoretical principles from deeper historical traditions of thinking about international politics. Understanding the factors that lead to security or insecurity has always been a key object of investigation in the realist tradition.⁴³² Although realism theory does not directly address the concept of energy security, it is possible to derive the approach from its principles about the state and the international order.⁴³³

In line with the IR theory of realism, international politics is anarchic without one central government and is mainly based on a balance of diplomatic and military power. In this context, the state is the central source of power and it competes with other states to preserve its own security or possibly expand with a view to achieving hegemony.⁴³⁴ In this context, states perceive cooperation between two or more states as dangerous and therefore extremely unlikely. Michael Klare, who contributed to the elaboration of the main assumptions of the (neo)realist approach to energy, treats energy security as a

See also Finon, D., and Locatelli, C., Russian and European Gas Interdependence: Could Contractual Trade Channel Geopolitics?, *Energy Policy*, Vol. 36, No. 1, 2007, p. 423-442

⁴³¹ Jørgensen, M., and Phillip L., *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*, London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2002, pp.6-7

⁴³² Rudolph, C., Globalization and Security. *Security Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 2003, pp. 1 - 32

⁴³³ Von Campe, C., *Energy Security in the United Kingdom*, Honours Degree Dissertation, University of Aberdeen, 2011. p.9

⁴³⁴ Donnelly, J., Realism, in Burchill, S., Linklater, A., Devetak, R., Donnelly, J., Paterson, M., Reus-Smit, C., et al. 3rd eds., *Theories of International Relations*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2005, pp.30-31

specific area within the broader field of Security Studies.⁴³⁵ From a (neo)realist perspective, Klare asserts that the emergence of energy security is due to three global factors related to oil. These factors are the fear of a progressive depletion of global oil production, the movement of oil production from industrialised to developing countries and the vulnerability of oil infrastructure to hostile groups.⁴³⁶ Drawing from this background, Correlje and van der Linde elaborated the RE paradigm to explain energy security from a (neo)realist angle. This paradigm foresees a situation in which energy relations are characterized by divisions among regions and states and where the absence of international markets is counter-balanced by the presence of state-owned energy companies.⁴³⁷

Contrary to the MI approach (see below), within this paradigm, energy trade and security follow a geopolitical logic. The geopolitical dimension of oil and fossil fuel is due to the fact that these resources are mainly concentrated in limited regions in the world characterized by political instability (Iran, Iraq, Libya, Venezuela) and that they are non-renewable.⁴³⁸ Within the RE paradigm, geopolitical calculations prevail over market-based rules and international institutions. In particular, energy plays a crucial role in the foreign policy of states as natural resources are becoming scarcer and more insecure. For example, China has fuelled concerns over the insecurity of the Malacca straits, and the related prospect of a military embargo of its oil supplies.⁴³⁹ To face their fears over energy security and the negative trends of energy resources, governments' direct involvement is needed to ensure access to and control of resources. Indeed, given the antagonistic environment of an anarchic world, it is too dangerous for a state to be entirely dependent on other states or private companies for its energy security as this implies a high degree of vulnerability. In addition, a free and integrated global energy market cannot exist, as states cannot rely on unstable markets for their security. For example, before the oil shocks of the 1970s state-owned companies of consumer countries had long-term bilateral agreements with producers to ensure predictability of

⁴³⁵ Klare, M., For Oil and Empire? Rethinking War with Iraq, *Current History*, Vol.102, 2003, pp. 129-35.

⁴³⁶ Klare, M., Energy Security, in Williams, P.D., *Security Studies - An Introduction*, Oxon: Routledge, 2008, pp.483-496

⁴³⁷ Aad Correljé and Coby van der Linde, *Energy Supply Security and Geopolitics: A European Perspective*, p. 535

⁴³⁸ Sovacool, B. L., Introduction, in Sovacool, B. L., eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Energy Security*, New York: Routledge, 2011, p. 21

⁴³⁹ Dannreuther, R., *International Relations Theories: Energy, Minerals and Conflict*, POLINARES, Working paper n. 8, September 2010

globally traded oil.⁴⁴⁰

Against this background, realism proposes firm state control and regulation of the energy system and market. Energy infrastructure within a state needs to be regulated and maintained by a national institution to ensure security and to prevent possible interference by private or foreign investors.⁴⁴¹

Such an approach engenders the belief that governments have the right to nationalize and actively support access to energy as a strategic asset. Before the 1973 oil crisis, nationalization of oil production occurred in Mexico (1938), Iran (1951), Iraq (1961), Egypt (1962), Argentina (1963), and Peru (1968). In particular, President Lázaro Cárdenas's decision to nationalize the oil industry in Mexico (1938) aimed to eject Western companies from the country and establish the state-owned Petroleos Mexicanos (Pemex). Today, it is still considered as one of Mexico's most popular decisions.⁴⁴² Another example is the decision taken by Gamel Abd al-Nasser of Egypt in 1957 to freeze the assets of international oil companies and nationalize the Suez Canal. Other examples include the Western European countries where the core economic and social role of energy led to an understanding of energy as a 'national' or 'public good'. In these states, energy companies have historically (before the 1980s) tended to be state-owned and, thus, received relevant state backing. More recently the re-nationalisation process undertaken by the Russian Federation in the mid-2000s (see below) and the re-nationalization of YPF – Argentina's largest oil producer – from the Spanish firm Repsol in 2012⁴⁴³, offer good examples revealing the characteristics of the RE paradigm at work.

The re-emergence of energy diplomacy further confirms the recent increase of the state in energy matters. Goldthau defines energy diplomacy as the support that a state gives to their energy companies to gain a competitive advantage in securing resources. A consumer country would use diplomacy to secure energy contracts while a producer country would rely on diplomacy to increase its access to markets or reserves. For example, as a consumer country, China's penetration in Africa epitomizes state efforts

⁴⁴⁰ Goldthau, A., and Witte, J.M., eds., *Global Energy Governance*. Berlin: Global Public Policy Institute, 2010, p.3

⁴⁴¹ Von Campe, *Energy Security in the United Kingdom*, pp. 9-10

⁴⁴² Miller Llana, S., and Eulich, W., *Brazil, Venezuela, and Mexico: Three Ways to Nationalize Oil*, The Christian Science Monitor, May 2012

⁴⁴³ Economides, M. J., Argentina's Re-Nationalization of the Energy Industry and What it Means, *Energy Tribune*, 18 September, 2012. Available from: <http://www.energytribune.com/20101/argentinas-re-nationalization-of-the-energy-industry-and-what-it-means-2#sthash.NhbaTCJf.dpbs> Accessed 20/12/2012

to secure energy supply. Conversely, the support of the Russian state to Gazprom's expansion abroad (e.g. in ex-Soviet states) is an example of energy diplomacy of a producer country.⁴⁴⁴ This is reminiscent of the US backing of the business strategies of the Seven Sisters oil companies, which dominated the global oil market until the end of the 1960s.

By virtue of its core role, energy can also be used as a way to wield hard diplomacy and to gain power. For example, the League of Nations decided to punish Italy for its invasion of Abyssinia in 1935 by restricting its access to oil.⁴⁴⁵ This illustrates the potential risk to security that can derive from a conflict over resources. In this respect, sensitive energy issues such as transit and political relations between exporter nations and end markets have a geopolitical character related to a state's sovereignty and in extreme cases, they might trigger conflicts. Russia's intervention in Georgia (2008) and the disputes between Russian and Ukraine are further examples of tensions over the Eurasian transit route.

In addition, in line with the IR neorealist perspective, relative gains are more significant than absolute gains in energy relations between parties. Energy security is conceived as a zero-sum game in which one country's energy security is at the detriment of another country.⁴⁴⁶ In this respect, the realist literature focuses on the new 'Great Game' in Central Asia – which sees Russia, China and the West in a zero-sum game for control over the region's energy resources –⁴⁴⁷ and on the so called 'scramble for African resources' – that reveals the renewed interest of the most powerful regions of the world in African natural resources.⁴⁴⁸

In sum, the geopolitical dimension of energy resources, problems with access to resources, nationalization of energy resources, state-controlled energy companies that prioritise ideological ambitions over market logics, and the reluctance of producers to accept foreign direct investments for political reasons are the characteristics that construct an RE paradigm. It can be noted how energy security is governed according to this paradigm in countries and regions divided on the basis of their political

⁴⁴⁴ Goldthau, Witte, *Global Energy governance. The new rules of the game*, pp. 25-33

⁴⁴⁵ Goldthau, Witte, *Global Energy governance. The new rules of the game*, p.27

⁴⁴⁶ Goldthau, Witte, *Global Energy governance. The new rules of the game*, pp.1-2

⁴⁴⁷ Blank, S., Energy, Economics and Security in Central Asia: Russia and its Rivals, *Central Asian Survey*, Vol.3, No. 14, 1995, pp. 373–406

⁴⁴⁸ Morris, D., The Chance to Go Deep: U.S. Energy Interests in West Africa, *American Foreign Policy Interests*, Vol. 28, No. 3 2006, pp. 225-238

calculations.⁴⁴⁹

2.2 The Neoliberal Approach

Generally, the liberal tradition in IR is a critique of the realist account and the latter's attention to *realpolitik* and geopolitics. Rather than focussing on the geopolitical dimension of energy security, the neo-liberal approach refers to a set of market-liberal, or free-market, economic principles. Generally, such principles promote the reduction of state control in the operation of the economy, and broadly advocate concepts such as privatisation, deregulation, free trade, and increased capital mobility. As a result, the role of the state in energy policy decreases in the belief that market dynamics will deliver energy security.

While accepting the realist assumption of an anarchical international order, neo-liberalism believes that cooperation between states is possible. In particular, cooperation occurs because states are mainly concerned with absolute gains, regardless of the gains of other states.⁴⁵⁰ Cooperation between states and companies becomes even more likely if the advantages from it are greater than the advantages of non-cooperation.

Within this paradigm, the prospect of mutual gains from trade leads parties to cooperate within institutions and set up market-based arrangements. As such, international cooperation should promote an integrated and multilateral world with competitive global markets and operative institutions. As a general rule, according to the neoliberal approach in an ideal world, markets work efficiently without transitional costs. Given that such an ideal world does not exist, institutions ensure that these costs are at least lowered. Hence, the MI paradigm proposes a scenario in which international energy markets play a key role in balancing demand and supply while institutions ensure the effective functioning of these markets. Institutions are made of formal rules (laws and regulations), informal constraints (norms, conventions) and often they include enforcement mechanisms.⁴⁵¹ North describes institutions as the rules of the game that

⁴⁴⁹ Metais, R., *Ensuring Energy Security in Europe: The EU between a Market-based and a Geopolitical Approach*, Brugge, College of Europe, 2013, p.11

For example, energy issues in relation to the war in Iraq in 2003, triggered divisions within the UN Security Council. See Metais, *ibidem*, p.11

⁴⁵⁰ Burchill, S., Liberalism, in Burchill et al., *Theories of International Relations*,. pp.64-65

⁴⁵¹ Goldthau and Witte, *Global Energy governance. The new rules of the game*, p.7

enable actors to play.⁴⁵² They are fundamental to structure global markets, govern financing, trading, trade agreements, and fix market failures by addressing short-term supply.⁴⁵³

The aftermath of the oil crisis in 1973 offers an example of the MI approach at work. The crisis resulted from the politicisation of oil supplies. The Arab-Israeli War of 1973 broke out when Egypt and Syria – with the support of other Arab countries – unexpectedly attacked Israel during Yom Kippur, the holiest day for the Jewish community.⁴⁵⁴ The US came to Israel's support through a re-supply of arms. As a result, the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC)⁴⁵⁵ announced an oil embargo against the US that lasted until March 1974. Following this experience, efforts were made to depoliticise the energy sector. The liberal MI paradigm became dominant through the promotion of an international market for energy. Consequently the importance of political factors and influence between producers and partners was downgraded. As such, the main paradigm was that energy had to be subject to the auto-regulative mechanisms of the market while the political sphere had to retain marginal regulative role. The idea was to avoid a politicization of international energy politics and achieve security of energy supply by relying on the international market. This implied a high degree of coordination within international institutions such as the International Energy Agency (IEA) that was set up in the wake of the 1973 oil crisis to respond to physical short-term risk management.⁴⁵⁶ As a confirmation of the cooperative spirit to face disruptions in the supply of oil, the IEA also established the International Energy Programme (IEP) for the creation of national emergency oil stocks among members, and the Coordinated Emergency Response Mechanism (CERM). This push towards liberalization generated the creation of the spot oil market in New York and London, thus contributing to an oil market less dependent on a bilateral long-term contract.⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁵² North, D., *Institutions, Institutional Changes, and Economic Performance*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990 quoted by Goldthau and Witte, *ibidem*

⁴⁵³ Goldthau and Witte, *Global Energy governance. The new rules of the game*, p.2

⁴⁵⁴ Farr, W. D., *The Third Temple's Holy Of Holies: Israel's Nuclear Weapons*. Counterproliferation Paper No. 2., Alabama (USA), Air University, September 1999. Available: <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/israel/nuke/farr.htm> Accessed 5/10/2013

⁴⁵⁵ OAPEC consisted of the Arab members of OPEC including Egypt and Syria.

⁴⁵⁶ Scott, R., *IEA-The First Twenty Years: History of the International Energy Agency, 1974-1994*. Paris, IEA-OECD, 1994

⁴⁵⁷ Goldthau and Witte, *Global Energy governance. The new rules of the game*, p.4

In addition, the consumer-producer dialogue was institutionalized through the creation of the International Energy Forum (IEF). In the years that followed, efforts were made to increase the transparency of the oil market through the IEF's Joint Oil Data Initiative (JODI) and the establishment of voluntary transparency initiatives such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) which intended to enhance the transparency of government revenues generated from the oil, gas and mining industry, and to improve accountability in the extractive industry sector.⁴⁵⁸ Other examples occurred in the 1980s and 1990s when in the UK first, and then in most of the OECD countries, fossil fuels as energy sources were increasingly considered in the West as a tradable good, or as the UK Department of Energy put it 'just another commodity', as opposed to a public good or national asset. Increasingly, the private sector became responsible for international energy trade and price setting, and energy supply. In other words, although energy was an important commodity, the market was seen as the most efficient and reliable tool to achieve energy security.

Overall, the liberalization of energy markets and the opening up of investment opportunities to foreign parties on a non-discriminatory fostered since the 1980s, contributed to the creation of a number of institutions in which energy plays a key role: the ECT, World Trade Organization (WTO), EU-Russia ED and the EU-Gulf Cooperation Council.

More recently a liberal-oriented position on energy has been taken in international fora such as the G-8 summit, which in 2007 adopted the Declaration 'Responsibility for Raw Material: Transparency and Sustainable Growth', declaring that:

'it is in our common global interest that resource wealth be used responsibly so as to help reduce poverty, prevent conflict, and improve the sustainability of resource production and supply. We firmly agree that significant and lasting progress in this area can only be achieved on the basis of transparency and good governance'.⁴⁵⁹

In sum, by reasoning through a (neo)liberal lens, energy trade becomes less predictable politically and publicly, or 'de-politicised', as the process of liberalization, privatization and multilateral coordination are monitored by institutions.

⁴⁵⁸ Goldthau and Witte, *Global Energy governance. The new rules of the game*, pp.7-18

⁴⁵⁹ Goldthau and Witte, *Global Energy governance. The new rules of the game*, p. 19

Having sketched two competing energy security paradigms from IR theories, the next section examines how the EU and Russia have constructed their approach to energy around the MI and RE paradigms. The construction of their energy paradigms is presented as a result of the discursive contestation within the internal borders and with the counter-part (the Other). This will demonstrate how the establishment of a paradigm as dominant emerges through social antagonism among competing discourses. It also sheds light on the constitutive role of Other to shape the 'energy identity' of the Self.

Generally speaking, although it is common to believe that the EU energy paradigm follows the MI paradigm while Russian energy governance ticks all the boxes to qualify as a RE paradigm, the next sections will demonstrate how this is only partly true. In fact, by looking at history, the EU on one side, and Russia on the other, have interchangeably governed their energy policy through the RE and MI paradigms. The employment of these schemes implies that history plays a central role as it allows studying how contemporary identities have been constructed in a given arc of time.

Analysing the discursive contestation and alternation from a historical perspective represents a first step to uncover the 'degree of segmentation' of contemporary energy discourses. In his book, Aalto does examine the past and present of European energy debate.⁴⁶⁰ However, it can be argued that his exploration remains focused on energy paradigms (layer two) and does not explore how these energy discourses are historically 'sedimented', that is, how they derive on specific historical representations of Self in relation to Other (layer three). In other words, he fails to account for how the energy discourses played out by the parties are constructed around historical representations of Self in relation to Other. As noted, the layered structure elaborated by Ole Wæver provides a tool to explore in more in-depth way how the historical mutual representations in the relations between Western Europe and Russia contribute, in the first place, to construct the contemporary energy discourses put forward by the EU and Russia. In addition layer two of the Wæverian structure also focuses on the extent to which the historical narratives and representations of layer one are reflected in the mutual energy relations between the EU and Russia.

⁴⁶⁰ Aalto, and Westphal, Introduction, in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe's Future Energy Security*, p.14

3 The Energy Paradigm of the EU

Energy in Western Europe has had a crucial role since the inception of the European Economic Community (EEC).⁴⁶¹ The then EEC has played a driving role in promoting and constructing the energy approach around the MI paradigm. Karan and Kazdagali argue that without the role of the EC, energy reforms in MSs would have occurred much later.⁴⁶²

The first European agreement – the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) – was at the core of the then EEC which represented a European organization, regrouping both producing and consumer countries.⁴⁶³ The ECSC was based on cooperation around coal and steel. This is particularly symbolic as coal and steel were the resources necessary to wage a war. On 9 May 1950, the French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman delivered the ‘Schuman declaration’ at the Quai d’Orsay. He proposed that: ‘Franco-German production of coal and steel as a whole be placed under a common High Authority [the future EC], within the framework of an organization open to the participation of the other countries of Europe’.⁴⁶⁴ Such an act was intended to help economic growth and consolidate peace between France and Germany, who had previously been enemies. In accordance with the MI energy paradigm, the ECSC was the first international organization based on the idea of supranationalism and on the principle of a common institution. As such, it was proposed that Franco-German coal and steel production be placed under a common High Authority within the framework of an organization in which other European countries could participate. However, along with the institutional dimension, there was a clear political objective to strengthen Franco-German solidarity, banish war and open the way to European integration.

Here, it can be seen how the EC aimed to construct an ethical nuance around its energy paradigm through the understanding of energy security as serving the ‘mission’ of

⁴⁶¹ The terms European Economic Community (EEC) and EU are used interchangeably, although formally they represent different entities as the EU came into existence after the Maastricht Treaty.

⁴⁶² Karan, M.B., and Kazdagli, H., The Development of Energy Markets in Europe, in Dorsman, A., Arslan, Ö, Karan, M.B; and Westerman, W., eds., *Financial Aspects in Energy: A European Perspective* London-New York:Springer, 2011, p.12

⁴⁶³ Belyi, A., *EU External Energy Policies*, POLINARES, Working Paper n.69, December 2012,p.3

⁴⁶⁴ European Union Website, *The Schuman Declaration – 9 May 1950*, Available from: <http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/symbols/europe-day/schuman-declaration/> Accessed 04/01/2013

avoiding war and furthering European integration.

As a continuation of the effort to establish the ECSC, further cooperation and institutionalization was proposed to create a common market and an atomic energy community. These were the ‘Treaties of Rome’ signed in March 1957. The first treaty established the EEC and the second established a European Atomic Energy Community, better known as Euratom. To tackle the scarcity of ‘conventional’ energy in the 1950s, the six founding States considered nuclear energy as a means of achieving energy independence.⁴⁶⁵ Therefore, provisions on cooperation in another energy-based area – nuclear power – were located at the core of the European Community. Similar to the ECSC, Euratom combined a number of institutional and geopolitical elements as it aimed to establish a system for supervising the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and set common nuclear legislation and further cooperation in this field.

Despite these beginnings, European integration in the field of energy policy did not develop too smoothly. Differences in energy mixes and structures of energy markets led MSs to maintain their pivotal role in both domestic and external energy policies. Thus, ambitious plans by the EC for a coherent policy often failed because MSs were reluctant to transfer sovereignty in a key field such as energy⁴⁶⁶ and to further energy policy cooperation at a Communitarian level. As a result, only few energy policy decisions were taken at the Communitarian level.⁴⁶⁷

It soon emerged that the standard Western European approaches to energy involved national public utilities and state-owned companies. Within MSs, energy policy was mainly conceived through the geopolitical prism of the security of supply to be managed at national level. In the cases of electricity and gas this implied monopolies with national state or local government ownership. States tried to avoid import of foreign gas through pipelines, which could be used as a geopolitical tool. For example, when the idea of exporting Soviet gas to Western Europe emerged in 1966, negotiations with the Italian firm, ENI, failed due to the conviction that the communists would make Europe dependent on Soviet gas.⁴⁶⁸ Overall, the Community’s intention to gain

⁴⁶⁵ European Union Website, *Treaty Establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom)*. Available from: http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/institutional_affairs/treaties/treaties_euratom_en.htm Accessed 15/05/2013

⁴⁶⁶ Belyi, *EU External Energy Policies*, p 2

⁴⁶⁷ Langsdorf, S., *EU Energy Policy: from the ECSC to the Energy Roadmap*, Green European Foundation, December 2011. Available from: http://gef.eu/uploads/media/History_of_EU_energy_policy.pdf Accessed 12/06/2013

⁴⁶⁸ Poussenkova, N., Rethinking Russia : The Global Expansion of Russia’s Energy Giants, *Journal of*

competence and construct a liberal-inspired approach to energy was challenged by MSs, which preferred a geopolitical energy paradigm, especially in the 60s.

With the oil crises in 1973-74, a push for European energy cooperation was seen as necessary and elements of a paradigm shift could be identified at a global level in the flourishing of an international institution aiming to promote cooperation, the IEA. Considerable emphasis was put on principles such as energy cooperation, liberalization and privatization. Measures in this sense were first proposed as remedies to overcome the oil crisis.

The oil crisis provoked a Communitarian reaction in the adoption of a 'Council Resolution concerning a new energy policy strategy for the Community' in 1974,⁴⁶⁹ through which resolution the Council, which expresses views of the MSs, adopted guidelines on the issue of energy supply and demand, and pointed out the advantage of close coordination among MSs.⁴⁷⁰

However, at MS level, these liberal practices were not fully sustained during and after the energy crises of the 1970s. Conversely, concerns over energy insecurity even led to a consolidation of a geopolitical approach. A political effect of the crisis was a nationalization of energy policies. In line with the RE approach, each MS acted to reduce infrastructural reliance on other states. For example, sea-bordering MSs built their own oil terminals on the coastline. In addition, electricity and gas supply were increasingly perceived as belonging to nation states while nuclear energy was furthered as it represented a way to achieve energy self-sufficiency.⁴⁷¹

Overall, while the energy crises offered a possibility to embrace the principles of the MI energy paradigm policy, MSs tended to stress their differences and concerns rather than to promote closer cooperation. MSs were adamant to keep their national sovereignty in ensuring adequate supplies through long-term planning and public ownership and involvement.

In the mid 1980s and 1990s, due to the impression that energy supplies were ample and prices low, energy policy focused more on the promotion of markets forces and private projects than on issues related to supply. Such a change was in line with global trends

International Affairs, Vol. 63, No. 2, 2010, pp. 103-124

⁴⁶⁹ Council of the European Communities, Council Resolution of 17 September 1974 concerning a new energy policy strategy for the Community, EUR-Lex, Brussels, 17 September 1974, Available from: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:1975:153:0001:0002:EN:PDF> Accessed 01/08/2013

⁴⁷⁰ Langsdorf, *EU Energy Policy: From the ECSC to the Energy Roadmap*, p.5

⁴⁷¹ Belyi, *EU External Energy Policies*, p.4

towards liberalization and it had implications for the decisions taken on energy investments and policies. Given that energy became ‘just another commodity’ subject to market forces, a more short-term view prevailed to the detriment of long-term calculations of energy availability.⁴⁷² Critics of this approach (antagonist discourse) contended that an increased level of competition was likely to destabilize the long-term investment horizons on which energy policy decisions had conventionally relied. To counter this antagonist discourse, the EC responded that liberalisation was not only compatible with supply security but that it would also support it.⁴⁷³ The 1988 EC proposals states that:

‘It must be acknowledged that a more integrated energy market is a significant additional factor as regards the security of supply for all Member States. Greater interconnection of equipment will make it possible to increase both the solidarity between Member States and the flexibility of the industry. It would therefore increase the emergency resources available in the events of a crisis and create the possibility of additional trading.’⁴⁷⁴

To sustain its liberal discourse, from the 1980s onwards, the EC became more willing to propose common initiatives and the MSs became more disposed to agree cooperative measures. In a 1981 Communication⁴⁷⁵, the EC called for energy policy coordination in Europe to achieve ‘Community solidarity’ in energy policy and ‘common approaches and initiatives in energy external relations.’ In addition, since the late 1980s various EU initiatives have been adopted to reinforce the supranational influence over particular energy sectors.⁴⁷⁶ In a 1990 document the EC acknowledged that national policy such as extensive state support or long term contracts could weaken the development of a single energy market. To avoid this scenario, the document underlined the need to set

⁴⁷² McGowan, F., Can the European Union’s Market Liberalism Ensure Energy Security in a Time of ‘Economic Nationalism’? *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, Vol.4, Issue 2, June 2008, pp. 92-93

⁴⁷³ McGowan, *Can the European Union’s Market Liberalism Ensure Energy Security in a Time of ‘Economic Nationalism?’*, p.94

⁴⁷⁴ Commission of the European Communities, The Internal Energy Market, Brussels, (COM)1988, 2 May, p.6. Available from: <http://aei.pitt.edu/4037/1/4037.pdf> Accessed 8/12/2013

⁴⁷⁵ Commission of the European Communities, The Development of an Energy Strategy for the Community, Communication from the Commission to the Council, Brussels, (COM)1981, 2 October. Available from: http://aei.pitt.edu/1508/1/energy_30_May_COM_81_540.pdf Accessed 19/07/2013

⁴⁷⁶ Andersen, S., European Integration and the Changing Paradigm of Energy Policy. The Case of Natural Gas Liberalisation, OSLO, University of Oslo, 2000

Communitarian measures to make supply security policies compatible with competition and internal market rules (the development of a Communitarian approach to energy policy).⁴⁷⁷

During the negotiation for the Treaty of Maastricht in the 1980s and 1990s, the EC – in a further attempt to foster energy cooperation at the EU level – presented its proposal to include a separate energy chapter into the Treaty and enhance energy cooperation at Communitarian level. But, some MSs, particularly those that had rather high reserves of their own, rejected this proposal, demonstrating reluctance to decrease their autonomy in the energy field.⁴⁷⁸ Energy was also excluded from the initial package proposed in the Cockfield Report on ‘Completing the Internal Market’. However, this did not prevent the EC from launching proposals for an ‘Internal Energy Market’ in 1988⁴⁷⁹ and for Directives prescribing the liberalization of energy markets. In this respect, the Directives to liberalise EU gas and electricity markets approved in the mid-1990s contributed to the creation of a new model, which drew from the UK experience of energy market liberalization.⁴⁸⁰ By acting along these lines, the liberal discourse of the EC was persistent and ensured the furthering of its liberalization agenda and its embracing of an MI paradigm. However, the level of implementation of the liberalization Directives and competition law differed from country to country. Some MSs (e.g. Portugal and Spain) promoted the emergence of national champions putting forward the argument that this would better secure their energy supplies.⁴⁸¹ Similarly, the Dutch government planned the creation of a ‘national champion’ by merging four regional companies (EPZ, EPON, UNA and EZH) into a joint organization called SEP

⁴⁷⁷ Commission of the European Communities, Working Paper of the Commission on Security of Supply, the Internal Market and Energy Policy, Brussels, 1990. Available at: http://aei.pitt.edu/4753/1/000857_1.pdf Accessed 13/12/2013, quoted by McGowan, *Can the European Union's Market Liberalism Ensure Energy Security in a Time of 'Economic Nationalism'?*, p.94

⁴⁷⁸ Langsdorf, *EU Energy Policy: From the ECSC to the Energy Roadmap*, p.5

⁴⁷⁹ Commission of European Communities, *The Internal Energy Market*, quoted by McGowan, *Can the European Union's Market Liberalism Ensure Energy Security in a Time of 'Economic Nationalism'?*, p.94 See also Buchan, D., *Energy Policy: Sharp Challenges and Rising Ambitions* in Wallace, H., Pollack, M., and Young, A.R., eds., *Policy Making in the European Union*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 357 – 379

⁴⁸⁰ Belyi, A., *EU External Energy Policy*, in Roggenkamp, M., Del Guayo, I., Ronne, A., Redgwell, C., eds., *Energy Law in Europe*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 191-220

In particular, in adherence with the neoliberal-approach, the main objective was to open up the electricity and gas markets by gradually opening these sectors to competition in the belief that market dynamics would deliver energy security.

⁴⁸¹ Karan, and Kazdagali in Dorsman, Arslan, Karan, and Westerman, *Financial Aspects in Energy: A European Perspective*, p.22

(Samenwerkende Elektriciteits Productiebedrijven) that would have competitive power in the EU market.⁴⁸²

Overall, throughout the 1990s – and especially around the time of the Amsterdam Treaty – the EC aimed to construct a liberal-inspired approach to energy within the EU through promotion of competition and cooperation. However, MSs consistently opposed the emergence of such a paradigm as dominant. For example, as an EC Communication reported, in a number of MSs the market power of incumbents in the sectors of gas and electricity determined a situation of lack of competition and transparency. These were sectors in which the EC had tried to enforce liberalizing measures.⁴⁸³

In the 2000s, the EC demonstrated willingness to sustain its liberal paradigm and win despite MSs opposition to the liberalisation of European electricity and gas markets. In fact, in 2003 the EC issue two new gas and electricity directives including ‘unbundling’ to ensure that energy transmission networks run independently from the production and supply side. Subsequently, in 2007 the EC launched its 'Third Energy Package', providing companies in MSs with two options for separating gas and electricity production from the ownership of distribution networks.⁴⁸⁴ The entire process of liberalization has changed the sector from a regulated structure of mainly state-owned monopolists controlling the entire supply chain into a market where the incumbent supplier cannot use its ownership of distribution and transmission networks to prevent new entrants from gaining access to the market.⁴⁸⁵

However, the proposals to extend the internal market in the electricity and gas sectors proved to be controversial. The incumbents affected by the EC’s proposal rejected this measure. They also enjoyed the support of their governments. In particular, France and Germany headed a minority of MSs in rejecting the EC's proposal. For example, German Economy Minister Michael Glos said he ‘strictly rejects’ the package and that ‘The high quality and security of German electrical power networks should not be put in

⁴⁸² The merger did not occur and the restructuring was a sellout to big companies of Europe (Electrabel, Reliant E.ON). See Van Damme, (2005) quoted by Karan, and Kazdagali, *The Development of Energy Markets in Europe*, p.17

⁴⁸³ Commission of the European Communities, Communication from the Commission. Inquiry Pursuant To Article 17 of EC Regulation No1/2003 Into The European Gas and Electricity Sectors, Brussels, COM(2006a), 10 January. Available from: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2006:0851:FIN:EN:PDF> Accessed 9/12/2013

⁴⁸⁴ A third option was later added because of the insistence of France and Germany

⁴⁸⁵ Kroes, N., A New European Energy Policy; Reaping the Benefits of Open and Competitive Markets. Energy conference: E-world Energy & Water, Press Release SPEECH 07-63, Essen, 2007. Available from: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-07-63_en.htm?locale=en Accessed 15/07/2013

danger'. Similarly, Christine Lagarde, French economy minister, said that 'We will do everything we can to oppose it [ownership unbundling].'⁴⁸⁶ The counter-argument put forth against the proposal regarded its impact on supply security. In fact unbundling would have weakened national energy champions and consequently decreased their bargaining power towards external suppliers such as Russia. In general, the opponents stressed a contradiction in the EC's approach to enhance both energy competition and greater security.⁴⁸⁷

Other examples demonstrating that MSs were 'neo-realist' players can be easily found. Despite many efforts of the EC to acquire greater competence in the energy field, art. 194(2) and (3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) still foresees that energy taxation, decisions on different energy sources and on how to exploit them, and measures on the general arrangement of the energy supply are subject to unanimity among MSs. MSs also preserve the right to conduct their bilateral energy relations with non-EU MSs.⁴⁸⁸ In addition, evidence about government intervention to protect their national interests in this regard include cases such as *Électricité de France (EDF)/Montedison*, *E.ON/Ruhrgas*, *Suez/Gaz de France*, and the famous example of *ENDESA*, that involved Gas Natural, E.ON, Enel and Acciona.⁴⁸⁹ MSs have often justified their intervention underlining the extreme importance of security of supply⁴⁹⁰ Yet, despite the resistance of MSs to endorse proposals bringing about communitarian forms of cooperation, instances can be found regarding MS's convergence with the more integrationist position of the EC and EP. MSs, in fact, recognized the need to reinforce and implement the internal energy market as necessary steps for the development of European Energy Policy. Another example is the Council's endorsement of the 20-20-20 targets⁴⁹¹, which represents a relevant political

⁴⁸⁶ EurActiv, *EU unveils plan to dismantle big energy firms*, 20 September 2007, Available from: <http://www.euractiv.com/energy/eu-unveils-plan-dismantle-big-en-news-218757> Accessed 9/12/2013

⁴⁸⁷ McGowan, *Can the European Union's Market Liberalism Ensure Energy Security in a Time of 'Economic Nationalism'?*, p.96

⁴⁸⁸ Braun, J., F., *EU energy policy under the Treaty of Lisbon*, Brussels: EPIN Working Papers, CEPS, 2011, p. 2. Available from: <http://www.ceps.eu/book/eu-energy-policy-under-treaty-lisbon-rules-between-new-policy-and-business-usual> Accessed 20/07/2013

⁴⁸⁹ Padros, C., and. Cocciolo E. E., *Security of Energy Supply: When Could National Policy Take Precedence Over European Law?*, *Energy Law Journal*, Vol. 31, No. 1, 2010, p.36

⁴⁹⁰ Domanico F., *Concentration in the European Electricity Industry: The Internal Market as Solution?*, *Energy Policy*, Vol.35, No. 10, 2007, pp. 5064–5076 quoted by Karan, and Kazdagali, *The Development of Energy Markets in Europe*, p.22

⁴⁹¹ A 20% reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels; raising the share of EU energy consumption produced from renewable resources to 20%; a 20% improvement in the EU's energy efficiency

commitment.⁴⁹²

To sum up, the EC's aim to construct the MI paradigm as dominant met the resistance of MSs, which promoted the main anti-hegemonic discourse against any transfer of sovereignty in favour of a supranational entity. The MSs approach seems to repeat the RE energy paradigm often used to describe the Russian approach to energy (see below). From this perspective, the discursive scenario can also be read along the schemes of temporality. The emphasis on nationalism indicates how MSs both consolidate a 'static' energy paradigm for the EU in a way that seems to 'replicate' the Russian one; whereas the EC push for a liberal and supranational energy governance denotes a move towards a genuine 'change' in the energy paradigms.

From a discourse analysis perspective, the continued interplay between the EC's liberalizing discourse (MI) and the MS's aim to keep sovereignty on matters concerning security of supply (RE) illustrates how contestation for discursive hegemony over the concept of energy security occurs. In other words, the EC's attempt to construct 'liberalizing energy' as the dominant discourse provided resistance by the MSs' competing discourse. This interplay demonstrates the degree of instability embedded in each dominant discourse. In addition, the contestation between the EC's and MSs' approaches to energy security help us to understand how, rather than assuming a specific discourse or representation as 'dominant', there is instead a struggle among competing discourse to become hegemonic.

Discursive contestation within the EU also enables us to reject the state-centric analysis of conventional constructivism and opens the ground for exploring how discursive tension existed beyond the mere state-centric level.

Having demonstrated how the contestation over energy paradigms occurred within the EU, next section investigates how the EC's constructed its approach to energy in the relations with external Others (e.g. Russia). Contrary to the promotion of the (neo)liberal paradigm of energy security within its internal borders, the EC's discourse in the realm of foreign energy policy has not consistently followed the same logic. Rather, in the energy relations with other actors who follow different approaches to energy security, the EC's liberal paradigm was often replaced with a more geopolitical one. This also gives ground to illustrate the power of constitutive outsiders to shape the

⁴⁹² Natorski, M., and Surrales, A., Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union's Energy Policy, *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2008, p. 83

EC's energy paradigms.

4 The External Dimension of the EU's Energy Policy

With reference to the external dimension of EU energy security policy, at the beginning it was limited to political coordination of energy security measures among MSs. Prior to the 1973 crisis, coordination measures on oil supply stocks were adopted in 1968. The Council Decision⁴⁹³ required MSs to maintain minimum stocks of crude oil and/or petroleum products to face oil shocks. Other coordination measures were at play during the first oil crisis in 1973. The Directive of the Council⁴⁹⁴ on measures concerning oil supplies was a first response to an external event such as the energy crisis. However, it did not contribute to the creation of a common foreign energy security policy of the MSs or to the Europeanization of energy security policies as it did not make reference to a EU political objective for energy security. Rather, policy targets were limited to a response to an external shock.⁴⁹⁵

Although the issue of a Communitarian approach to energy security first appeared on the European agenda during the oil crisis, it was only from the 1990s onwards that the EC made concrete efforts towards formulating and implementing a EU external energy policy. With the first assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published in 1990, the 'Earth Summit' in Rio in 1992, and the adoption of the Kyoto protocol in 1997, climate change – and thus energy issues – came strong on the EU agenda. More and more European policy-makers came to the conclusion that energy and climate challenges were of such a scale that solutions were not to be found on the nation state level. As a result, the climate change agenda added a new dimension to EU energy policy and acted as a catalyst for the development of a common external

⁴⁹³ Council of the European Communities, Council Decision of 20 December 1968 on the Conclusion and Implementation of Individual Agreements between Governments relating to the Obligation of Member States to Maintain Minimum Stocks of Crude Oil and/or Petroleum Products, 20 December, 1968.

Available from: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=DD:I:1968_II:31968D0416:EN:PDF Accessed 06/07/2013

⁴⁹⁴ Council of the European Communities, Council Directive of 24 July 1973 on measures to mitigate the effects of difficulties in the supply of crude oil and petroleum products, EUR-Lex, 24 July 1973.

Available from: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31973L0238:EN:HTML> Accessed 23/07/2013

⁴⁹⁵ Belyi, *EU External Energy Policies*, p. 4

energy policy.⁴⁹⁶ In 1995 the EC issued a White Paper⁴⁹⁷ on energy policy that delineated three key dimensions of the common external energy policy: security of supply, global competitiveness through European energy integration, and environmental protection.⁴⁹⁸ The debate over these three dimensions of the EU's external energy policy increased in the 2000s.

Given the greater emphasis on the external dimension of the EU energy policy in the 2000s, this section will focus on how European institutions and MSs contributed to the construction of the EU's external energy paradigm in that decade. The EC has increasingly focused on the security of supply and the reliability of exporter countries. The Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute in 2006 and 2009, which affected the supply in the EU, led the EC to increase its concerns on the securitization of energy. To tackle this challenge, the EC, along with the EP, put greater emphasis on the discourse of diversification of energy supply (in the forms of different sources and transit) and on the need to set energy partnerships with producers and transit countries with a view to export its domestic energy 'acquis' (e.g. through the Energy Community)⁴⁹⁹ 'ensuring stable and predictable regulatory framework'.⁵⁰⁰ In this respect, the Green Paper on Energy Policy of the EU (2000) represented the first strategic document on external energy security policy in the history of the EU. It developed the idea of initiating dialogues with other key countries, an approach that was soon implemented in the EU-Russia ED launched in 2000.⁵⁰¹

In March 2007, another EC proposal on energy security, the 'Energy Policy for Europe' (EPE) called for the creation of a more integrated European energy approach. Specifically, some of the constitutive elements of the EPE emphasized the need to

⁴⁹⁶ Langsdorf, *EU Energy Policy: From the ECSC to the Energy Roadmap*, pp.5-6

⁴⁹⁷ Commission of the European Communities, White Paper, An Energy Policy for the European Union, Brussels, (COM)1995, 13 December. Available from: http://europa.eu/documentation/official-docs/white-papers/pdf/energy_white_paper_com_95_682.pdf Accessed 29/07/2013

⁴⁹⁸ Padros, Coccio, *Security of Energy Supply: When Could National Policy Take Precedence Over European Law?*, p. 35

The EU was called to negotiate energy as a united bloc while diversifying supply and promoting competition to ensure security and sustainability of energy supplies.

⁴⁹⁹ Naturski, and Surrales, *Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union's Energy Policy*, p. 77

⁵⁰⁰ Piebalgs, A., External projection of the EU internal energy market, in *Towards an EU External Energy Policy*, The 2006 Brussels Conference, Brussels, 20-21 November 2006f, pp. 21-24, quoted by Naturski, and Surrales, *Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union's Energy Policy*, p. 77

⁵⁰¹ EU-Russia Centre Review, *EU-Russia Energy Relations*, EU-Russia Centre, Issue 9, Brussels, June 2009, p. 9. Available from: http://www.eu-russiacentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/10/review_ix.pdf Accessed 20/07/2013

further a common energy foreign policy and ensure security of supply. For its part, the then Competition Commissioner Kroes reiterated the mantra that the solution to the threats to EU's security of supply from outside lies in ensuring competition in the internal energy market. In addition, climate change and its negative implications on the environment (hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005) featured as a further global 'threat' on the agenda of the EC. In the words of the then Environment Commissioner Dimas, tackling such a challenge requires 'decisive and urgent actions'.⁵⁰² Generally, the common denominator of the EC energy discourse – mostly shared with the EP – was the liberal principles of integration and cooperation among MSs as a way to 'speak with one voice' and achieve a common energy policy. Apart from the new emphasis on climate change, the EC discourses were in line with earlier proposals. Yet, especially in 2000s, they were presented through the lens of new external threats and, thus, with an emphasis on securitization tone in the hope that the target audience (MSs) would endorse them.⁵⁰³

For its part, the EP was even more assertive compared to the EC in illustrating the threats to the EU's energy security and in the promotion of a EU-wide project of a common energy policy. From the EP perspective, the potential cut in supply from Russia was described as a 'real challenge'⁵⁰⁴ while the 'protectionist support for national market leaders' by MSs was described as causing lack of competitiveness in the energy sector.⁵⁰⁵ As for partnerships with other countries, the EP approach assumed a more confrontational tone compared to the EC's one. A 2010 resolution of the EP even proposed a coalition of consumers countries to compensate for the power of the

⁵⁰² Dimas, S., Climate Change: The Urgency of the Problem, Brussels, 31 May 2005 quoted by Natorski, and Surrales, *Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union's Energy Policy*, p. 76. Available from:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/05/309&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=es> Accessed 20/12/2013

⁵⁰³ Natorski, and Surrales, *Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union's Energy Policy*, p. 77

⁵⁰⁴ European Parliament, Resolution on a European strategy for sustainable, competitive and secure energy. Green Paper, Strasbourg, 14 December 2006, quoted by Natorski, and Surrales, *Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union's Energy Policy*, p. 78. Available from: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P6-TA-2006-0603&language=EN> Accessed 10/10/2013

⁵⁰⁵ European Parliament, European Parliament resolution on security of energy supply in the European Union, Brussels, 23 March 2006, quoted by Natorski, and Surrales, *Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union's Energy Policy*, p.78. Available from: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P6-TA-2006-0110&language=EN&ring=B6-2006-0192> Accessed 3/12/2013

production countries.⁵⁰⁶

Overall, the neoliberalist approach of the EC discourse – shared and furthered by the EP – aimed to strengthen the Community role of a principal that interacts with its MSs and promotes cooperation with third regions and countries.⁵⁰⁷ Consequently, such an approach reduces the role of states as the main actors of international politics. Similar to the construction of the EU's energy paradigm within internal borders, the main resistance to the MI-inspired external energy agenda came from MSs. Coal-dependent Poland for example, prevented the EU from speaking with a single voice on a low-carbon energy agenda at the Rio Earth Summit in 2012, thus opposing the objective to pursue environmental sustainability internationally.⁵⁰⁸

In conflict with the idea of developing a common external energy policy, large MSs continued to support bilateral agreements and their national energy champions as a way to secure energy supply nationally. For example, the case of Germany's bilateral agreement with Russia to build the North Stream pipeline ran against the EC and EP's objective of diversification of energy supply. Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sikorski, even labelled the Nord Stream pipeline project⁵⁰⁹ a new 'Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.'⁵¹⁰ Similarly, Italy and Hungary's agreement with Gazprom to build the South Stream pipeline clearly undermined the Nabucco pipeline, an EU-backed project designed to diversify the source of gas from non-Russian exporter countries.⁵¹¹ These examples show how Russia has determined differences in MS positions. While MSs such as Italy, Germany, and Hungary signed bilateral agreements with Russia, Central European MSs instead, were in favour of decreasing dependence on Russia – viewed as using energy as a political tool against them.

Furthermore, MSs tended to promote intergovernmental forms of cooperation as opposed to communitarian solutions. In fact, while endorsing the EC and EP's discourse

⁵⁰⁶ European Parliament, *Resolution on a European strategy for sustainable, competitive and secure energy*, quoted by Natorski, and Surrales, *Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union's Energy Policy*, p.79

⁵⁰⁷ Belyi, *EU External Energy Policies*, pp.8-9

⁵⁰⁸ EurActiv, *Poland Blocks EU's Zero-Carbon Plan*, 18 June 2012. Available from: <http://www.euractiv.com/climate-environment/poland-blocks-eus-zero-carbon-pl-news-513368> Accessed 20/04/2013

⁵⁰⁹ The North Stream pipeline supplies Germany with Russian gas circumventing Poland by the construction of an undersea pipeline in the Baltic Sea.

⁵¹⁰ Riley, A., *Nordstream: An Economic and Market Analysis Perspective of the North European Pipeline Project*, Brussels, Centre for European Policy Studies, 2008. Available from: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/dv/peti20080129_economicanalysisriley/PETI20080129_EconomicAnalysisRiley_en.pdf Accessed 20/07/2013

⁵¹¹ Natorski, and Surrales, *Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union's Energy Policy*, p.72

in favour of cooperation, several MSs preferred an intergovernmental system to set the terms of cooperation. For example, in deviation from the EC and EP discourses, the ‘NATO energy’ agreement proposed by Poland was designed to be an extra-EU intergovernmental cooperation system through which a party would bring assistance to another party affected by cuts in its energy supply.⁵¹²

Moreover, the determination to maintain sovereignty in deciding the national security strategies was instead a common feature of MSs discourse on the development of an external energy policy. For example, Portugal expressed its view that ‘member states should keep the right to decide on the most appropriate solutions for implementing energy policies and measures, in order to take account of their specific situations’.⁵¹³

Similarly, Spanish representatives noted the need for ‘preserving national sovereignty over energy sources and safeguard national preferences for the choice of energy-mix’.⁵¹⁴

Yet, despite the resistance of MSs to endorse proposals bringing about new institutional forms of cooperation, individual MSs also expressed views in line with the EC and EP discourse. Belgium, for example, recognized that ‘the time has come to boost Europe’s influence in so strategic an area as energy’, and that ‘the pursuit of a European energy policy demands that Europe be able to speak with a single voice and bring its full economic political weight...in dialogue with third countries, both producer countries and consumer countries.’⁵¹⁵ In addition, in December 2013, the Council adopted a report that promoted the development of an external dimension of the EU energy policy, thus confirming the need to ‘speak with one voice’. The adopted report states that ‘the Commission, the Council and member states should continue their effort in the further development of the EU’s external energy policy’.⁵¹⁶

⁵¹² Naturski, and Surrales, *Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union’s Energy Policy*, p.81

⁵¹³ Council of the European Union, New Energy Policy, (Portuguese Delegation), Brussels, 3 February 2006d, quoted by Naturski, and Surrales, *Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union’s Energy Policy*, p.82. Available from: <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/06/st05/st05977.en06.pdf> Accessed 1/12/ 2013

⁵¹⁴ Council of the European Union, New Energy Policy (Contribution from Spain to the Austrian Presidency’s Note on the New European Energy Policy), Brussels, 7 February 2006h, quoted by Naturski, and Surrales, *Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union’s Energy Policy*, p.82. Available from: <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/06/st06/st06084.en06.pdf> Accessed 1/12/2013

⁵¹⁵ Council of the European Union, New Energy Policy (Contribution from Belgium on the new energy policy of the European Union), Brussels, 3 February 2006f, quoted by Naturski, and Surrales, *Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union’s Energy Policy*, p.82. Available from: <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/06/st06/st06014.en06.pdf> Accessed 1 /12/2013

⁵¹⁶ Council of the European Union, External Energy Relations. Follow-up to the European Council of 22 May 2013: Review of Developments on the External Dimension of the EU Energy Policy, Brussels, 12 December 2013, p.12 Available from:

In the same report, the Council also demonstrates its sharing of the EC's objective to export the principles of its internal energy market in third countries:

'Regulatory convergence is a key instrument for the extension of the EU internal energy market to neighbouring countries. Market reforms, development and modernisation of institutional frameworks as well as the creation of stable and predictable investment frameworks should be encouraged, as appropriate and as needed, in relations with third countries. In doing so, a regional geographically balanced approach should be encouraged whenever beneficial, and differentiation and flexibility are important underlying principles for engaging with EU neighbours, based on the EU acquis'.⁵¹⁷

Such a standpoint is sustained also with regard to the relations with Russia:

'In the relations with **Russia**, energy cooperation should reflect the gradual integration of the economies. The negotiations on the energy chapter of the new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with full consistency with the internal energy market legislation should be advanced with vigour and firmness'.⁵¹⁸

In particular, here the Council and MSs dismissed the egalitarian and sovereignty-based discourse often played against Communitarian attempt to further integrate the energy field. They rather opt for an 'empiresque' kind of narrative similarly to the one that the EC has tried to promote in its relations with third countries and Russia (see below). In doing so, the Council denies Russia a 'special status' in global energy politics and considers her as just one among other neighbouring countries.

In general terms, it can be argued, therefore, that the adherence to MI or RE energy paradigms have alternated among the EU institutions. While recognizing the need for action to ensure energy security, the European Council and individual MSs did not

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%2017756%202013%20INIT&r=http%3A%2F%2Fregister.consilium.europa.eu%2Fpd%2Fen%2F13%2Fst17%2Fst17756.en13.pdf> Accessed 18/12/2013

⁵¹⁷ Council of the European Union, *ibidem*, p.9

⁵¹⁸ Council of the European Union, *ibidem*, p.10

share the EC and EP's position in favour of a communitarian level to deal with it. In line with the RE paradigm, MSs rather reiterated reluctance to transfer sovereignty to the supranational level and pushed for inter-governmental forms of cooperation among MSs. It can be argued that MS positions were to continue 'better exploiting the synergies and complementarities between the various, internal and external, components of energy policy'.⁵¹⁹ In doing so, the discourse of the European Council and MSs appear in contestation with the discourse of the EC and EP that attempted to mobilize support around an EU-wide approach.

To sum up, in its policy documents on the foreign dimension of energy, the EC and EP seem to stick to the MI paradigm supported in the internal debate. Stated principles are interdependence, market integration within and beyond Europe, and a convergence of governance standards with foreign partners in line with a 'rules-based governance' of energy security. However, it can be argued that, applied to the foreign policy domain, such an MI approach conceals a geopolitical tone. The internal market has often served as the model for regulatory rules and standards to be extended to oil and gas producing countries in other regions. In this respect, a number of international agreements promote a transfer of the EU energy regulatory framework to neighbors (e.g. Energy Community, Baku Initiative⁵²⁰, Euromed). In particular, the wording of the ENP affirms that the Action Plans for neighboring countries are expected to 'promote further gradual convergence of energy policies and the legal and regulatory environment, increased energy efficiency and energy savings, renewable energy and co-operation in energy technologies, such as clean coal'.⁵²¹ The fact that 'external actors don't play the same game as the EU',⁵²² is a further example of the EC's belief that more open and accountable governance in producer states is a necessary part of Europe's own energy security interests. These examples demonstrate how the EC's inclination to consider

⁵¹⁹ Council of the European Union, A New Energy Policy for Europe, Brussels, 6 February 2006g, quoted by Naturski, and Surrales, *Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union's Energy Policy*, p.83. Available from: <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/06/st05/st05814.en06.pdf> Accessed 7/12/2013

⁵²⁰ In particular, the Baku Initiative originates from the ENP, a policy launched in 2004 through which the EU aimed to extend its regulatory standards in the energy field of the European neighborhood. The ENP was initially proposed to Russia too.

⁵²¹ Commission of the European Communities, Communication, from the Commission. European Neighbourhood Policy. Strategy Paper, Brussels, (COM)2004, 12 May. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/strategy/strategy_paper_en.pdf Accessed 20/08/2013

⁵²² Naturski and Surrales, *Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union's Energy Policy*, p.75

itself as pursuing the mission to disseminate its ‘universal’ energy principles derives from the encounter with the constitutive outside space that needs to be Europeanized.

These principles of the EU internal market – namely, cooperation and the EU’s allegedly ‘good practices’ in the energy field – are incorporated in the foreign policy positions of the EU and, thus, they are embedded in the foreign energy policy discourse. From this perspective, while the EC’s stated approach to external energy policy can be initially described as revolving around the concepts of ‘market-governance’, significant geopolitical implications can instead be grasped. The idea to promote as many as possible internal energy standards to third countries reflects the imperial design to ‘educate’ third countries by exporting the Community’s energy governance.⁵²³ In other words, the combined aims to export energy standards with a view to ensure good energy governance characterizes the EU’s external energy policy as geopolitical. The intention to Europeanize the outside conceals the ambition to obtain third parties’ adherence to the EU’s paradigm and ultimately to the EU-like political space. Although the EU intends to set its external energy policy telling the MI story as it does in its internal dimension, another side of the story is strictly geopolitical.

Further evidence is visible in policy documents that clearly underline how the EC espouses a combination of market and governance principles as an implicit geopolitical strategy to export the EU’s internal energy standards in third countries. For example, the EC’s 2007 Strategic Energy Review underlines the need for international partnerships based on ‘shared rules or principles derived from EU internal energy policy’ through ‘transparent legal frameworks’ in producer states.⁵²⁴ Significantly, in its September 2007 ‘unbundling’ proposal,⁵²⁵ the EC restates the belief that internal market rules should be the tool to exert influence over third country producers.⁵²⁶

These examples revealed an understanding of energy security that goes beyond the MI model. Rather these are clear attempts to reproduce the EU’s constituent principles –

⁵²³ Youngs, R., *Europe’s External Energy Policy. Between Geopolitics and Market*, CEPS Working Document No. 278, November 2007, p.2. Available from: <http://aei.pitt.edu/7579/1/Wd278.pdf> Accessed 20/09/2013

⁵²⁴ Commission of the European Communities, *Communication from the Commission to the European Council and the European Parliament, An Energy Policy for Europe*, Brussels, COM(2007), 27 January, pp. 18-19, quoted by Youngs, *Europe’s External Energy Policy. Between Geopolitics and Market*, p.2 Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/energy_policy/doc/01_energy_policy_for_europe_en.pdf Accessed 6/6/2013

⁵²⁵ The proposal regards the separation of the production from the distribution of energy supplies.

⁵²⁶ Youngs, *Europe’s External Energy Policy. Between Geopolitics and Market*, p.2. In particular, Youngs uses the formula ‘market-governance’ nexus to refer to the combination of market and governance principles used in the EU’s foreign energy policy.

considered to be universally valid – in third countries.

In a way, the EC's intention to develop an open and multilateral framework based on the projection of its energy 'acquis' can also be read as the 'empiresque' logic according to which the intrusion of its internal energy rules are used to deconstruct Other's sovereignty. In this respect, the imperial component embedded in the EC's discourse is interpreted along the lines of Hardt and Negri, as opposed to more classical renderings. Hardt and Negri hypothesize an ongoing transition from a 'modern' imperialism – with conflict among individual nation-states – to an evolving postmodern structure consisting of ruling powers, which represent a global 'Empire'. This Empire is made up of 'monarchies' (the US and the G8, and international organizations such as NATO, the International Monetary Fund or the World Trade Organisation), 'oligarchies' (multinational corporations and other nation-states) and 'democracies' (various non-government organizations and the UN). The West seems influential in all the components. The Empire is total and universal, and resistance to it (e.g. from Russia) can only be characterized in the form of negation. The 'enemy' opposing resistance is not identified on the basis of ideological contraposition or national belonging. The enemy is each entity that threatens and resists the rule of law and the ethical order rather than a political system or a nation.⁵²⁷

In this respect, energy relations with Russia clearly elucidate how resistance to the EC's 'empiresque' attempt to transfer rules of law occurs. The next sections will present examples (e.g. 2006 Green Paper, European Charter Treaty and the 'Gazprom clause') epitomizing how the interaction with the 'Russian Other' has triggered confrontational and geopolitical paradigms that resonate negatively with the liberal paradigm supported by the EC within EU's borders. From this perspective, Russia features as a constitutive outsider.

4.1 The Green Paper and the European Charter Treaty (ECT)

The 2006 Green Paper issued by the EC called for the EU to develop a common, coherent European Energy Policy within the EU as a basis for leading the global energy

⁵²⁷ Benn W. M., *The Shape of the Signifier: 1967 to the End of History*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004, pp.171-173
See also Negri A., and Hardt, M., *Empire*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2000, p.6

debate in the international arena. In this respect, the Green Paper argued that energy security can be obtained by constructing a ‘pan-European energy community...with a common regulatory space, a renewed approach with regard to Europe’s partners, including Russia, and finally a new Community mechanism to enable rapid and coordinated reactions to emergency external energy supply situations’.⁵²⁸ From the document it emerges how Russia is considered as the natural counterpart to the EC’s ambitions to create an external energy policy:

‘A new initiative is particularly opportune with regard to Russia, the EU’s most important energy supplier. The EU, as Russia’s largest energy buyer, is an essential and equal partner in this relationship. The development of a common external energy policy should mark a step change in this energy partnership at both Community and national level. A true partnership would offer security and predictability for both sides . . . [whose] results could be integrated into the framework of EU–Russia relations due to replace the current EU–Russia PCA agreement in 2007’.⁵²⁹

By addressing Russia as an equal partner for its energy relations, the EC seems to talk the language of the cooperative narrative. In terms of historical narrative, the EU / Western Europe seems to accept Russia as a key player in Europe, which is understood as a united continent with no borders. In particular, similarly to the Western European representation in the mid-eighteenth century, Russia was considered to have reached a status of equal partner in the European Concert. This implies that the ‘degree of Otherness’ through which the EU-Self represents the Russian-Other is very narrow. In terms of energy paradigms, the emphasis on cooperation and partnership suggests that the EC sticks to a MI understanding of energy security in its relations with Russia:

‘A true partnership would offer security and predictability for both sides, paving the way for the necessary long-term investments in new capacity. It would also mean fair and reciprocal access to markets and infrastructure including in

⁵²⁸ Commission of European Communities, *Fuelling Our Future: the European Commission Sets Out Its Vision For An Energy Strategy for Europe*, Press Release IP/06/282, Brussels, 8 March 2006c. Available from: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-06-282_en.htm Accessed 20/03/2013

⁵²⁹ Commission of the European Communities, *Green Paper. A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy*, Brussels, COM(2006b), 8 March, p. 15. Available from: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2006:0105:FIN:EN:PDF> Accessed 20/03/2013

particular third party access to pipelines. Work should start on an energy initiative based on these principles'.⁵³⁰

However, it can be demonstrated how the boundaries and a consequent 'othering' process do exist and conceal a geopolitical connotation. The emergence of boundaries appears when the EU-empire treats its neighbours as 'learners', and consequently, the 'degree of otherness' broadens too. The 2006 Green Paper in fact, confirms that a type of 'leader-follower' narrative is at work. For example, the document states that energy security can best be achieved through a 'pan European energy community', a 'common regulatory space' around Europe. This requires '[r]einforced market-based provisions on energy...in the EU's existing and future agreements with third countries'.⁵³¹ Yet, in the same year (2006), the paper 'An External Policy to Serve Europe's Energy' drafted by the EC for the European Council, states that energy security ultimately relies on 'the EU extending its own energy market to include its neighbours within a common regulatory area with shared trade, transit and environmental rules'.⁵³²

Drawing from Prozorov's argument, the EU's approach to energy relations with Russia is consistent with an exclusive foreign policy strategy that is characterised by a 'subject-object asymmetry'.⁵³³ From a normative viewpoint, the EC foreign policy can be viewed as aiming to convert the identity of other actors.⁵³⁴ As confirmation of such an EU ethos, the Green Paper adds that: 'if the EU backs up a new common policy with a common voice on energy questions, Europe can lead the global search for energy solutions'.⁵³⁵

By adding to Prozorov's argument, it can be noted how the historical Western European self-representation of being the embodiment of the 'true' Europe is here reproduced. Similarly, the aim to extend 'its own energy market to include its neighbours' reflects the presence of another historical theme such as that of Western Europe as a 'civilian

⁵³⁰ Commission of European Communities, Ibidem

⁵³¹ Commission of European Communities, *Green Paper. A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy*, p.17

⁵³² Commission of the European Communities, *An External Policy to Serve Europe's Energy Interests*. Paper from Commission/SG/HR for the European Council, Brussels, 2006d. Available from: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/reports/90082.pdf Accessed 21/03/2013

⁵³³ Prozorov, *Understanding Conflict between Russia and the EU*, p.161

⁵³⁴ S., Keukeleire, and J., Macnaughtan, *The Foreign Policy of the European Union*, Basingtoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, p.334

⁵³⁵ Commission of European Communities, *Green Paper. A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy*, p. 4

power' loaded with the ethical mission to spread good governance. Both representations reveal the existence of a wide 'degree of Otherness' designed by the 'developed' EU towards its neighbours, which are, thus, constructed as 'developing' countries. On the other side, the image of the neighbours as 'developing' countries, contributes to the construction of the EU as a 'developed' entity. While Prozorov's argument stresses how the EU constructs Russia as an object, he pays little attention to the constitutive power of outside, that is, to how the existence of 'Others' also support the construction of the EU's identity.

In this light, it can be seen how the Green Paper contains a contradiction concerning the official discourses of the EC. In fact, while on one side the EC aims to pursue a true partnership with Russia based on equality and market-based rules for energy, on the other side it still shows the segmented imperial practice of Europeanizing its partner and including them in its political space. The EC's intention to extend its energy 'acquis' ultimately reveals the 'othering' towards the EU's neighbors and the imperial political project over 'Europe', its neighbours and Russia. Through the aim to transform and integrate European neighbours within its regulatory sphere the EU attributes itself the right to transfer its good energy practices into its 'near-abroad' - understood as its 'Region'- and, thus, characterizes the EU's vision of energy security in geopolitical terms.

The ECT is another example illustrating how the EC constructed its external energy policy along a geopolitical paradigm.⁵³⁶ As a result of West's victory in the Cold War, Russia's adherence to liberal economic policies led to a belief that a global shift was about to occur towards a pro-market approach even in the ex-Soviet space. As such, the ECT was drafted in the early 1990s within the scenario of the promising West-East energy cooperation.⁵³⁷ The ECT was initially based on the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) trading regime rules and norms and therefore informed by the liberal principles of the MI. The idea of the creation of such a treaty was dictated by the awareness that – in conditions of growing interdependence between the consuming, producing and transit countries – international cooperation can be more effectively

⁵³⁶ Signed in December 1994, entered into force in April 1998. On the participation of the European institutions, see Council and Commission Decision 98/181/EC, ECSC, Euratom of 23 September 1997 on the Conclusion, by the European Communities, of the Energy Charter Treaty and the Energy Charter Protocol on Energy Efficiency and Related Environmental Aspects, OJ 1998 L 69/1.

⁵³⁷ S., Kolchin, *Why Russia Refuses to Ratify Energy Charter*, Ria Novosti, Moscow, 7 April 2006. Available from: <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20060407/45451331.html> Accessed 27/07/2013

regulated by multilateral laws rather than by bilateral agreements. In this connection the role of the ECT was seen as to build a legal foundation for energy security based on principles of open competitive markets, rules-based multilateralism and cooperation similar to the rules inspiring the EU internal energy market.

In its wording, the ECT seems also to endorse equality principles between exporter and importer countries. Countries with natural resources should be able to attract investments, protect their interests and to guarantee reliable transportation for their energy exports to their consumers. For the energy importing countries, the ECT is designed to protect their investments and mechanisms to promote the security of supply in the European continent. However, the ECT also presented a clear opportunity to tie Russia – one of the world's leading fossil fuel exporters – into a market economy through a binding agreement based on neo-liberal principles.⁵³⁸ This emphasis on Western neo-liberal principles was confirmed by the fact that the proposed framework for cooperation was designed to promote an efficient use of energy in support of the transition of the former Soviet countries⁵³⁹ towards a market-based economy that at the time represented the dominant discourse.⁵⁴⁰

In line with the Western European representations in the post-Cold War period, Russia and the ex-Soviet space were described as potential allies in the international politics that was now ready to be enlightened by Western teaching after decades of darkness. In particular, the international cooperation between European countries and other industrialised countries aimed to develop the energy potential of Central and Eastern European states.⁵⁴¹ Here, it can be argued that the historical themes of 'the land of the future' endowed with an evolutionary potential for the security of energy supply in Europe was at play. In addition, the EU seemed to employ a broader understanding of

⁵³⁸ For example Art. 19 of the ECT requires states to promote market-oriented price formation and appropriate consideration of environmental costs.

⁵³⁹ Commission of the European Communities and Council of the European Communities, Decision of 23 September 1997 on the Conclusion, by the European Communities, of the Energy Charter Treaty and the Energy Charter Protocol on Energy Efficiency and related Environmental Aspects, EUR-Lex, Brussels, 23 September 1997. Available from: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexplus!prod!DocNumber&lg=en&type_doc=Decision&an_doc=1998&nu_doc=181 Accessed 10/11/2013

⁵⁴⁰ A., Boute, Energy Efficiency as New Paradigm of the European External Energy Policy. The Case of the EU-Russian Energy Dialogue, PEEER Conference Governing Energy in Europe and Russia, University of Warwick, 3-4 September 2010, p.19. Available from: http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/csgr/peer/warwick/paper_energy_efficiency_in_eu_russia_energy_warwick-a.boute.doc Accessed 10/11/2013

⁵⁴¹ Commission of the European Communities and Council of the European Communities, *Decision on the conclusion, by the European Communities, of the Energy Charter Treaty and the Energy Charter Protocol on energy efficiency and related environmental aspects*

Europe, which also included the 'East'.⁵⁴²

This demonstrated how the ex-Soviet space was represented more as an 'opportunity' rather than as a 'threat'. This reflected a narrower 'degree of Otherness' - compared to other periods – that sheds some light on West's benevolent attitude towards the ex-Soviet space.

Yet, it can be also noted how a geopolitical strategy seemed to lie behind the need to formalize the liberal principles of interdependence and cooperation between importer and exporter countries. In fact, resulting from the EU's initiative and modelled on Western neo-liberal principles, the ECT might be seen as a mechanism to guarantee interdependence and security of supply by stimulating and protecting Western investments in the 'traditional' upstream energy sector of exporter countries. In this respect, the EU tried to speed up Russian ratification of the ECT, proving to attach great importance to it.⁵⁴³ As the Secretary General of the Energy Charter Secretariat, Ms Kemper, underlined 'This step [Russia's ratification] is seen by the EU as highly desirable for the creation of a positive investment climate for European energy companies in Russia. Major emphasis has been placed on the need for ECT ratification during the EU's dialogue with Russia on a strategic energy partnership'.⁵⁴⁴

If contextualized in the aftermath of the post-Cold War 'euphoria', it can be argued that the ECT contains a geopolitical element in the nexus between the possibility of Western / EU investments in the Russian energy sector and Western security of supply. In other words, the ECT is a European attempt to facilitate Western (European) investments in the energy sectors of Russia and in the Newly Independent States (NIS) by playing the discourse that the penetration of Western investments in the Eastern energy sector would generate a win-win exchange.⁵⁴⁵ It is based on the logic that 'Russia and many of its neighbours were rich in energy resources but needed major investments to ensure their development, whilst the states of Western Europe had a strategic interest in

⁵⁴² The theme of 'land of the future' emerged for example, also in the period following the fall of the USSR since Western oil companies realized the huge potential of the new Russia and started to seek participation in energy-related projects. As the CEO of Conoco, Archie Dunham said 'When you looked at the opportunity, you became enthusiastic'. See D., Yergin, *The Quest: Energy, Security, and the Remaking of the Modern World*, London: Penguin Books, 2011, p.33

⁵⁴³ Kolchin, *Why Russia Refuses to Ratify Energy Charter*

⁵⁴⁴ The European Energy Charter, *Dialogue with Moscow Continues over ECT Ratification*, Charter News - A Newsletter from The Energy Charter, Issue No.8, Autumn 2001, p.1. Available from: http://www.encharter.org/fileadmin/user_upload/document/document1166112294.pdf Accessed 08/08/2013

⁵⁴⁵ Boute, *Energy Efficiency as New Paradigm of the European External Energy Policy. The Case of the EU-Russian Energy Dialogue*, p.19

diversifying their sources of energy supplies'.⁵⁴⁶

In addition as clearly stated, the 'ECT establishes a framework ...ensuring security of energy supply for the European Union'.⁵⁴⁷ This confirms the view that the ECT appears more as a tool for the EU to secure energy supply through geopolitics. According to Aalto, by insisting on Russia's ratification of the ECT, the EU seems to de-politicise energy relations with Russia as a way to pursue its geopolitical interest (enhancing its own energy security of supply).⁵⁴⁸ As such, rather than conceiving 'Europe' as inclusive of the 'East', the EU demonstrates a tendency to represent itself as the embodiment of the 'true' Europe and to construct the 'East' as an object to transform. The other part of the story – often overlooked by the existing literature – is that the 'East' is a fundamental element for the construction of the EU-Self's identity as the embodiment of the 'true' Europe, therefore, the 'East' hold a constitutive power.

An extension of this argument is that the ECT also offers grounds to appreciate the extent to which the EC constructs Russian behaviour as non-cooperative and responsible for the inefficiency of energy governance in the European continent. In a 2004 Communication, the EC states that:

'Despite the existence of the Agreement [PCA], some specific questions related to energy which have arisen in the course of the last ten years, or which have been suspended since 1994, as in the case of trade in nuclear materials, remain unresolved, causing dissatisfaction to both sides. It has not been possible to find solutions through the Energy Charter Treaty...as Russia has stalled ratification of the Treaty since signing it in 1994'.⁵⁴⁹

In this discourse, Russia remains construed as the disease that needs to be cured.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁶ Energy Charter Secretariat, *The Energy Charter Treaty and Related Documents*, September 2004, p.13. Available from: http://www.encharter.org/fileadmin/user_upload/document/EN.pdf Accessed 08/08/2013

⁵⁴⁷ European Energy Charter, 30 January 2007. Available from http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/energy/external_dimension_enlargement/127028_en.htm Accessed 27/09/2014

⁵⁴⁸ P., Aalto, European Perspective for Managing Dependence, in J., Perovic, R.W. Orttung, and A., Wenger, eds., *Russian Energy Power and Foreign Relations: Implications for Conflict and Cooperation*, London: Routledge, 2009, pp.157-180

⁵⁴⁹ Commission of the European Communities, Communication from the Commission to the Council and European Parliament. The Energy Dialogue between the European Union and the Russian Federation between 2000 and 2004, Brussels, (COM)2004, 13 December. Available from: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2004:0777:FIN:EN:PDF> Accessed 7/7/2013

⁵⁵⁰ Browning, *The Region-Building Approach Revisited: The Continued Othering of Russia in*

Such a representation of the Other signals a broad ‘degree of Otherness’. The EC positioned Russia in a negative relation to energy governance in Europe. Russia’s subjectivity is denied and associated to the ‘false’ Europe. Conversely, through such a discursive practice the identity of the West and the EU are constructed as true and universal.

4.2 The ‘Gazprom Clause’

In general terms, the EC’s attempt to transpose the market-based principles of internal energy governance/policy to the external dimensions of its energy policy proved to be in contradiction especially in respect to relations with Gazprom, the Russian energy giant. The geopolitical and realist priorities attached to reducing external dependencies and diversifying energy supply (RE paradigm) clashes with the neoliberal principles of creating a ‘mutually-beneficial energy partnership’ with producer states (MI paradigm).⁵⁵¹ In its relations with Russia’s Gazprom, the EC has tended to adhere to the geopolitical and realist logic (RE paradigm) rather than to its market-based principles (MI paradigm). For example, after failed attempts to finalize bilateral energy co-operation agreements with Russia – which has continuously rejected any kind of binding agreements (e.g. ECT under the EU-Russia PCA) – the EC proposed a ‘reciprocity clause’ to be introduced into the Third Energy Package.⁵⁵² This clause establishes that companies of non-EU MSs can operate in EU markets on condition that they comply with the same unbundling principles in force in the internal market that separates ownership of production, transport and commercial distribution of gas.⁵⁵³ The move was generally considered to be targeted at Russian Gazprom.⁵⁵⁴ The clause was finally included into the text of the EC’s Third Energy Package and was justified by fears that the failure of foreign companies to unbundle would lead to the indiscriminate acquisition of EU energy grids by third countries (e.g. Gazprom).⁵⁵⁵ As Commission

Discourses of Region-Building in the European North, p.48

⁵⁵¹ Youngs, *Europe’s External Energy Policy. Between Geopolitics and Market*, p.8

⁵⁵² Buchan, *Policy Making in the European Union*

⁵⁵³ Pick, *EU-Russia Energy Relations: A critical analysis*, p.330

⁵⁵⁴ EurActiv, *Gazprom Clause Issues Russia Ultimatum for Energy Co-operation*, 20 September 2007. Available from: <http://www.euractiv.com/energy/gazprom-clause-issues-russia-ult-news-218748> Accessed 20/07/2013

⁵⁵⁵ EurActiv, *Gazprom Clause Issues Russia Ultimatum for Energy Co-operation*

President Barroso stated when the EC presented its new proposals: ‘to protect the openness of our market, to protect the benefits that unbundling will bring, we need to place tough conditions on ownership of assets by non EU companies to make sure that we all play by the same rules’.⁵⁵⁶ This seems to be in contradiction with the egalitarian narrative that emerged in the 2006 Green Paper which proposed ‘fair and reciprocal access to markets and infrastructure including in particular third party access to pipelines’⁵⁵⁷ in the EU’s relations with Russia.

The EU further proves to be driven by an RE logic in that it not only contradicts its pro-competition, pro-liberalization approach to energy but it also makes claims about Russia as posing obstacles to foreign investments in its internal energy market. In fact, in a 2011 report the EC stated that ‘Russian law on foreign investment in strategic sectors imposes very low thresholds for ex ante approval of foreign energy investments in Russia, making EU investment in the upstream Russian energy market very cumbersome’.⁵⁵⁸

As former executive director of the International Energy Agency (IEA), Claude Mandil, argued, such an EU approach might be seen as alienating (read ‘othering’) Russia through a policy of double standards. The EC has often pushed Russia to open its internal energy market and infrastructure to European companies and investors through, for example, the ratification of the ECT. But, the EC itself demonstrates a practice of denying third-country companies such access as well as a negative reaction to acquisition attempts by foreign investors.⁵⁵⁹ If the EU were to be coherent with its neo-liberal paradigm, it should have promoted an inclusive logic with Gazprom in line with the principle of market interdependence. Instead, the ‘Gazprom clause’ – designed to limit the Russian giant’s penetration into the European market – reflects a geopolitical logic that aims to exclude Russia and reduce its influence in the ‘true’ Europe.

A reasoning based on the historical narratives suggests that much of this can be

⁵⁵⁶ J.M., Barroso, *Energising Europe: A Real Market with Secure Supply*. Opening Remarks at Press Conference on the Commission’s Energy Package, 20 September 2007. Available from: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-07-553_en.htm Accessed 20/07/2013

⁵⁵⁷ Commission of the European Communities, *Green Paper. A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy*, p.15

⁵⁵⁸ Commission of European Communities, Trade and Investments Barriers. Report 2011. Engaging our Strategic Economic Partners on Improved Market Access: Priorities for Action on Breaking Down Barriers to Trade. Report from the Commission to the European Council, Brussels, 2011a, p.9. Available from: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2011/march/tradoc_147629.pdf Accessed 20/07/2013

⁵⁵⁹ EurActiv, *Pipeline Politics? Russia and the EU’s Battle for Energy*, 20 August 2009. Available from: <http://www.euractiv.com/energy/pipeline-politics-russia-eus-bat-links dossier-188483> Accessed 20/07/2013

attributed to the negative discourse and representation of Russia as a ‘threat’ which has, at times, become dominant over the competing representation of ‘learner’ or ‘equal partner.’ By representing Russia as ‘threat’, the EC draws divisions in the European continent between the EU-Europe and Russia-Europe through energy. It also fuels the ‘othering’ of Russia from the European Concert. Borders are traced between the inside and outside of Europe and result in a division between Self and Other.

The EU’s energy relations with Russia, ultimately demonstrate how the EU’s political project on ‘Europe’ tends to draw lines of exclusion at the heart of its own integrationist programme.⁵⁶⁰

Generally, it has been demonstrated how the main historical Western European representations of Russia – found in layer one – have re-emerged in the EU’s energy approach. In fact, beyond the narrative of cooperation and equal participation in European politics, other historical descriptions of Russia are at play: ‘learner’ (the 2006 Green Paper and ‘An External Policy to Serve Europe’s Energy, Strategic Energy Review’), ‘land of the future’ (ECT), embodiment of the ‘false’ Europe as opposed to the Western European ‘true’ Europe, and ‘threat’ to the internal energy policy of the ‘true’ Europe (the Gazprom clause).

From a Self’s perspective, each of these representations reflects various ‘degrees of Otherness’. In addition, the presence of Other (Russia) also contributes to the constitution of Self identity (Western Europe) as ‘equal’, ‘superior entity’, ‘teacher’, or ‘true’ embodiment of Europe.

From this perspective, it can be seen that the way in which the EU draws boundaries with Russia helps construct its spatial identity as ‘European’. For example, in policy frameworks such as the EU-Russia ED, the emphasis on cooperation with Russia implied a EU understanding of ‘Europe’ as a united continent with no clear boundaries (see chapter 6). Conversely, examples such as the ‘Gazprom clause’ and the ECT denote a confrontational approach to the energy relations with the Russian Other and consequently determine a spatial demarcation between a ‘true’ EU-Europe and a ‘false’ Russian-Europe.

Furthermore, the use of the concept of ‘degree of Otherness’ to determine Self’s position in relation to Others, overcomes the bias of the existing (rationalist and

⁵⁶⁰ Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*

mainstream constructivist) literature on EU-Russia (energy) relations which, as noted, assumes tension between actors. The critical constructivist / post-structuralist standpoint challenges and problematises such an assumption and opens up the possibility of conceptualising ‘otherness’ not only as threatening or confrontational but also as cooperation and partnership.⁵⁶¹ In this light, the critical constructivist / post-structuralist approach enables one to deconstruct the rationalist and conventional constructivist belief that the interests and identities of the EU and Russia are simply different or in opposition. Actors’ interests and their utility functions are not given a priori but unfold in discursive contestation.

In addition, the centrality of the historical representations combined with the concept of ‘degree of Otherness’ are the added value of this research to the existing discourse-based accounts on EU-Russia energy relations.⁵⁶² These discourse-based accounts still overlook the importance of the historical representations of the ‘Other’ in the formation of the energy paradigm of the Self (i.g. interplay between layers one and two). This research instead provides a methodology that allows understanding of how the narratives identified from the historical encounter of the actors influence the actors’ discourses on practical policy such as energy. Other studies also pay little attention to how the energy paradigm of the ‘Other’ is constitutive of the Self’s energy paradigm and ultimately of its identity.

Similarly to the analysis conducted in the first part of this chapter, the next section aims to explore how Russia has constructed its energy paradigm in internal borders and in the relations with the EU.

5 The Russian Energy Paradigm Between MI and RE

Normally, Russia’s external energy policy is viewed as influenced by Great Power politics thinking. Concepts such as ‘geopolitics’, ‘the energy weapon’, growing ‘statism in energy’ are the conventional representations used to describe Russian energy policy.

⁵⁶¹ See Connolly, *Foucault and Otherness*; Neumann, *Identity and Security*, quoted by Browning, Christou, *The Constitutive Power of Outsiders: The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Dimension*, p.110

⁵⁶² See for example, Aalto 2008, Morozov in Aalto 2008, Khasson 2008-2009, Tichy and Kratochvil 2013, Kuzemko 2013

Much of the literature agrees that Russia operates within a neo-realist approach, employing energy exports for political aims.⁵⁶³

Yet, a more in-depth examination shows that the use of energy as a means of achieving Russia's national interests changed over time because of shifts in dominant discourses both domestically and internationally. As such, the Russian approach to energy has alternated between the MI and RE paradigms. This section will aim to provide evidence of this alternation.

As of the late 1800s, when the tsarist regime saw great potential for the Russian Empire, energy was included in the list of tools to use in order to pursue its interests.⁵⁶⁴ However, the Empire lacked the technology and the capital to create a national energy industry. In order to overcome this problem, the tsarist regime rejected the neo-realist principle of direct involvement in the management of energy resources and lifted its foreign investment restrictions welcoming Western firms (European and American) to develop the Baku and Volga oil fields. As shown in the previous chapter, it can be said that this cooperation was also made possible thanks to the positive mutual representations between Western Europe and Russia in the nineteenth century, during which Russia was perceived as the guardian of the Concert of Europe. In particular the Russian Empire had positive relations with Western partners, such as the UK, France and the US.⁵⁶⁵

Yet, a geopolitical understanding of energy became dominant when the Bolsheviks used energy to achieve the political objective of overthrowing the tsarist regime.⁵⁶⁶ For example, in December 1904 the workers of the Baku oilfield declared a general strike, which subsequently triggered the 1905 revolution.⁵⁶⁷ The strict reaction of the tsar led

⁵⁶³ See for example, K., Barysch, *Russia, Realism and EU Unity*, Centre for European Reform, Policy Brief, 2007

See also E., Lucas, *The New Cold War: Putin's Russia and the Threat to the West*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008

See also Light, M., Keynote Article: Russia and the EU: Strategic Partners or Strategic Rivals? *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 46 Annual Review, 2008, pp.7-27 quoted by Pick, *EU-Russia Energy Relations: A critical analysis*, p.323

⁵⁶⁴ In that period, income from energy export started to flow into the coffers of the Russian Empire. The income increased in the late 1920s (at the very beginning of the Soviet experience), and by the 1950s it accounted for half of Soviet export profits. By the 1950s, energy was one of the main component of Russia's economic and political power.

⁵⁶⁵ L., Goodrich, and M., Lanthermann, *The Past, Present and Future of Russian Energy Strategy*, Stratfor Global Intelligence, 12 February 2013. Available from: <http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/past-present-and-future-russian-energy-strategy>, Accessed 12/04/ 2013

⁵⁶⁶ Goodrich, Lanthermann, Ibidem.

⁵⁶⁷ T., Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil*, London, Verso, 2011, p.33

Bolshevik activists to burn the Baku oil fields. With Lenin, energy was in fact perceived as an important feature of Soviet planning. Essentially, the underpinning idea was that the USSR had to be an independent energy nation and that energy resources represented a crucial sector for the Soviet economy. This was recognized in Stalin's autarky policy that included the ambition to develop a proper energy sector. A similar example regards art. 3 of the Treaty of Brest-Litovk – signed in September 1918 between Bolsheviks and Germans – which entitled the Russian government to exploit the oil fields in the Baku region, despite the fact that Azerbaijan had gained its independence in May 1918. Such an instance not only further proves the Bolsheviks' vision of energy security as a zero-sum game – in which one country's security is at the detriment of another country – but it is also indicative of a specific view, according to which Russia enjoys a sort of 'property right' over the resources of its near abroad.⁵⁶⁸ It can be said that aspects of such a view still persist in the contemporary Russian energy policy.⁵⁶⁹

Following World War II, the USSR continued adhering to the RE energy paradigm. As one of the two global Great Powers acting in a divided Europe, the USSR aimed to dominate the European and global energy market. This intention reflected the historical context of the bi-polar Cold War settlement during which the Great Power USSR depicted the West as its implacable enemy in its bid for victory for socialism. Between the 1950s and 1960s the USSR became the second largest oil producer in the world and the major supplier to both Eastern and Western Europe. In particular, the subsidization of oil to Western European countries made them dependent on Russian oil and strengthened the Russian position in its own periphery. This approach – which the CIA called the Soviet Economic Offensive – can be considered in line with a neo-realist understanding of energy. In fact, the Soviets were less concerned about increasing their profits and more focused on the political objective of maintaining a sphere of influence and making Western Europe vulnerable. However, as a confirmation of this political ambition and at the detriment of the economic logic, oil production became commercially inefficient because the profits were below expectations while fields were rapidly depleted.⁵⁷⁰ From this perspective, it can be argued that the political contraposition with the West contributed to constructing the Russian approach to energy

⁵⁶⁸ J., MacDougall, The Transcaucasian 'Near Abroad'. The case of Azerbaijan, *Demokratizatsiya*, Vol. 5, No. 1, Winter 1997, p. 93

⁵⁶⁹ After the collapse of the USSR, the Russian government used Gazprom as a tool to maintain its control over former soviet republics. In particular, Gazprom has significant assents in the energy sectors of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Ukraine etc.

⁵⁷⁰ Goodrich, Lanthermann, (2013), *Ibidem*

in line with geopolitical reasoning.

If the Bolsheviks and the early post-Soviet leadership had used energy in a neorealist fashion in the 1950s and 1960s, a gradual paradigm shift occurred in the 1970s. The huge increase of price of oil due to the crises in the Middle East combined with the increasing difficulties of maintaining the inefficient and costly USSR structure, led the Soviet leadership⁵⁷¹ to a crossroads where the choice was between the need to follow an economic logic (MI paradigm) – using the high global prices to justify a price rise in Eastern Europe and benefit the Soviet economy – or a geopolitical calculation (RE paradigm) – keeping its sphere of influence tied to Moscow by continuing to subsidize Eastern European countries and preventing them from seeking other energy sources. Russia opted to follow an economic logic. In fact, in 1975-1976 the Kremlin decided to augment the price of oil in the East on the basis of global market prices. This trend continued in the mid-1980s but by then the price of oil had dramatically decreased. The West embargoed oil from the USSR in favour of oil from Saudi Arabia. This problem was aggravated by the backward energy technology of the Soviets. Against this background, as of 1985, the USSR followed again a market-based approach by increasing energy prices for the Eastern countries, requiring hard currencies for payment, and allowing foreign investments in the energy sector.

Evidence of a pro-market approach applied to the energy sector can be found also during the presidency of Mikhail Gorbachev in the 1980s and reached its peak under Yeltsin in the 1990s.⁵⁷² During the last period of Gorbachev's presidency, a number of joint ventures with Western oil companies were agreed. For example, the US company Conoco agreed to employ its expertise learnt in Alaska to a project with Lukoil in the Arctic region. Similarly, Exxon was partnered with Russian state company Rosneft in the Sakhalin-1 project.⁵⁷³ This demonstrated how the 'West' was represented more as a 'teacher' or as an 'opportunity' rather than as a 'threat', thus, the 'degree of Otherness' towards the 'West' was narrower compared to other phases of history.

One of Yeltsin's main goals was to stop the planned communist approach that for decades had guided the Soviet economy. Russia's firms were no longer state-owned, Russians citizens were given the opportunity to own property and firms, the state had to

⁵⁷¹ Leonid Brezhnev was the Secretary General.

⁵⁷² Goodrich, Lanthermann, *The Past, Present and Future of Russian Energy Strategy*

⁵⁷³ Yergin, *The quest: energy, security, and the remaking of the modern world*, p.35
Sakhalin is an island off the coast of Russia's far east.

rely on taxes for collecting revenue, and its currency was traded on foreign exchange markets.⁵⁷⁴ As a result, the market-based model that – by the end of the 1990s – Russia seemed prepared to adopt also covered the energy sector. In November 1992, President Yeltsin signed a decree N. 1403 starting the privatization of the oil industry. The decree intended to break up the Soviet oil monopoly and set up several holdings companies. It also turned state-owned companies into joint-stock companies (Lukoil, Surgutnetftegaz and Yukos)⁵⁷⁵ establishing that the state would retain 51% of shares during a three-year transition period whilst the remaining shares would be given out in voucher auctions.⁵⁷⁶ In general, the sign of a change from mercantilist / state-led energy governance to a market-based paradigm was – at that time – becoming the dominant discourse within the context of the so-called ‘Washington Consensus’. The growing consensus in such an approach to energy governance reinforced an understanding of energy increasingly as an essentially market and trade-driven sector within a multilateral arena where nations, companies and societal groups are interdependent. Therefore, external factors contributed to determining the increasing dominance of the (neo)liberal approach to energy in Russia. This could be particularly noted in the Russian private sector. For example, as of 1994, former state oil companies were privatized. In the 1990s, when Lukoil⁵⁷⁷ was made the first oil company to operate abroad, its CEO, Vagit Alekperov, preferred to distinguish Lukoil as a Western-style company driven by commercial rather than political objectives.⁵⁷⁸ Similarly, Khodorkovsky decided to run Yukos by employing a Western kind of governance and even listed it on Western exchanges.⁵⁷⁹ As Yergin reports, during his visits to Western oil companies, Alekperov⁵⁸⁰ was positively impressed by the different structure and way of operating (vertically integrated companies able to manage exploration, production, refining and marketing). He defined a ‘revelation’, the ability of a company to deal with different issues at the same time and returned to Russia under the belief that this type of corporate

⁵⁷⁴ P., Desei, Russian Retrospectives on Reforms from Yeltsin to Putin, *Journal of Economic Perspectives* Vol. 19, No.1, 2005, p. 87

⁵⁷⁵ P.J., Luong, and E., Weinthal, *Oil Is Not a Curse: Ownership Structure and Institutions in Soviet Successor States*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010

⁵⁷⁶ N., Poussenkova, *The Energy Dimension in Russian Global Strategy from Rigs To Riches: Oilmen Vs. Financiers in The Russian Oil Sector*, The Petroleum Energy Centre of Japan and The James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy of Rice University, 2004

⁵⁷⁷ The leading Russian oil company at the time.

⁵⁷⁸ N., Poussenkova, Rethinking Russia : The Global Expansion of Russia’s Energy Giants', *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 63, No. 2, 2010, pp.103-124

⁵⁷⁹ Yergin, *The Quest: Energy, Security, and the Remaking of the Modern World*, p.39

⁵⁸⁰ In 1990, he was appointed Deputy Ministry of the Oil and Gas Industry, acting Minister of Fuel and Energy.

organization (Western) was the modern way to run the oil industry. As a result, he tried to reform the Russian energy sector following the Western model. However, such a proposal caused opposition in the Russian internal debate where political adversaries accused Alekperov of ‘destroying the oil sector’.⁵⁸¹ In a way, Alekperov’s visit to the West triggered comparable reactions to Peter the Great’s learning experience in Western Europe. In a similar manner, the positive impressions of both can be read as an acknowledgement of the superiority of the Western civilization vis a vis Russian traditions.

However, evidence of a Russian understanding of external energy policy in a neorealist fashion can also be found in the post-Cold War period. As explained in the historical chapter, although the foreign policy discourse imposed by Minister Kozyrev – especially in the period between 1993-1996 – opted for cooperation with the West, aggressive foreign policy in the post-Soviet space was at the same time part of this narrative. This was also reflected in the energy relations with Russia’s neighbors. For example, in 1992-1993 the Kremlin reduced gas supply to the Baltic States during a dispute about Russian-speaking minorities and Russian military establishment on Baltic territory. Moreover, in the early 1990s Russia interrupted the flow of gas towards Ukraine during a conflict about the Black Sea Fleet.⁵⁸²

Despite this evidence, it can be argued that in the post-Cold War period, the global ‘Westernisation’ model and the creation of a new world politics of energy governed by international cooperation and through agreed principles and international institutions, emerged as a dominant discourse even in Russia. Yeltsin’s reformers⁵⁸³ intended to follow these principles to end the planned economy dictated by the Soviet credo. As a result, economic shock therapy, price liberalization and privatization programs were implemented under Yeltsin.

However, the way in which privatization in Russia was carried forward caused a situation in which a few oligarchs obtained a huge chunk of the national wealth. The

⁵⁸¹ Yergin, *The Quest: Energy, Security, and the Remaking of the Modern World*, p.28

⁵⁸² K.S., Stegen, Deconstructing the ‘Energy Weapon’: Russia’s Threat to Europe as Case Study, *Energy Policy*, Vol.39, Issue 10, October 2011, pp. 6505-6513

⁵⁸³ Yegor Gaidar – acting Prime Minister – is considered as one of the author of the ‘shock therapy’ approach to Russian economic reform, which included the rapid elimination of price controls and industrial subsidies. Anatoly Chubais contributed to the Russian privatization plan as well as the vouchers reform.

‘voucher reform’ and the ‘loans for shares’ epitomize how this occurred. In late 1992, Yeltsin launched a program of free vouchers as a way to initiate mass privatization. Under the program, all Russian citizens received vouchers for purchase of shares of state enterprises.⁵⁸⁴ The majority of Russians sold their vouchers to oligarchs for cash. In 1995, facing a high fiscal deficit, the government adopted a ‘loans-for-shares scheme’ advised by banker Vladimir Potanin and endorsed by Anatoly Chubais, then a deputy prime minister. The program intended to trigger a liberalization process by leasing the largest state industrial assets through auctions in the hope to cash in revenues rapidly. Under the ‘loans for shares’ program, the government sold majority stakes in companies operating in crucial sectors – such as energy – in exchange for loans (Yukos, Lukoil, Sibneft, Surgutneftegas). For example the oligarch Mikhail Khodorkovsky was able to become the chair of Yukos – one of Russia's most valuable energy companies – at a relatively low price.⁵⁸⁵

As noted in the previous chapter, after this disappointing shock therapy, the competing statist narrative became dominant in that many Russians favored a return to the Russian collectivist idea (rooted in the Slavophilist narrative) of communal assets being owned and run by the state as the representative of the people (rooted in the Panslav narrative). Putin’s accession to power marked the beginning of a new phase for oligarchs and a return to state patrimonialism.⁵⁸⁶ This approach was reflected also in the energy sector, although claims in favour of privatization and multilateralism alternated with the dominant statist and geopolitical approach.

Overall, it can be argued that the Russian approach to energy has alternated between the MI and RE paradigms. Along with internal facts, the existence of the Western Other (EU) and the various ways it was represented (‘degree of Otherness’) has also contributed to explaining this alternation. From this perspective, it can be seen that the way in which Russia has drawn boundaries with the West/Western Europe contributed

⁵⁸⁴ Desai, *Russian Retrospectives on Reforms from Yeltsin to Putin*, p. 88

In late 1992, Yeltsin launched a program of free vouchers as a way to give mass privatization a jump-start. Under the program, Russians received vouchers with a value of around 10,000 rubles, for acquisition of shares of select state enterprises.

⁵⁸⁵ S., Galitskiy, *Oligarchs: The First Russian Capitalists*, BRICS Spotlight, Thomas White International, May 2010. Available from: <http://www.thomaswhite.com/global-perspectives/oligarchs-the-first-russian-capitalists/> Accessed 20/07/2013

⁵⁸⁶ Putin intended to liberate the state from those oligarchs who had increased their power in the decision-making process.

to construct its spatial identity as ‘European’. From this perspective, the period characterized by energy cooperation with the West/Western Europe implied a Russian understanding of ‘Europe’ as a whole continent with no clear boundaries (‘white zone’). Conversely, a confrontational approach to energy relations with the Western Other, denoted the existence of a divided ‘Europe’.

As noted in the previous chapter, Putin’s pragmatic statism, combines aspects of statism with the idea of Russia’s ‘European calling’. The next section examines how this Putin applied this approach to the energy field and how Gazprom became a key actor of the foreign policy of Putin’s Russia.

5.1 Putin’s Energy Doctrine and Gazprom’s role in Russia’s Energy Governance

Following the failure of Western-inspired ‘shock therapy’ – which caused unemployment, deterioration of welfare, tax evasion, etc, – the majority of Russians favoured a return to the ‘Russian’ ideas of an authoritarian state ownership of communal assets (e.g. energy) on behalf of the people as promoted by pragmatic statist.

Historically, authoritarian drift and socialist / ‘collectivist’ ideas represent two main traits of Russia’s internal culture and rules. On one side, under the Tsarist domination, the majority of Russians were for a long period serfs and considered the property of the landowners. With the abolition of serfdom in 1861, the Tsars still kept significant authority over the Russians. On the other side, the idea of communal living, or ‘collectivism’, was accepted in Russia for centuries before the communist revolution in 1917. As noted in chapter 3, at the beginning of the 1800s, ‘Slavophilism’ started to oppose individualism, which was considered a Western principle and alien to the ‘natural’ Russian collectivist tendency. Conversely, the community was understood as more important than the individual.⁵⁸⁷ As will be noted, aspects of the authoritarian and collectivist ideas are also evident in Putin’s view of energy policy.

⁵⁸⁷ The Warwick Global Energy MBA:Energy in Global Politics, Lesson 3, *Key Players: Importers, Exporters and Politics*, University of Warwick, 2012, pp. 9-11

The period in which Putin acted as president of the Russian Federation (1999-2008) or as a Prime Minister (1999-2000 and 2008-2012) is, in fact, particularly associated with realism in energy policy, which gradually replaced Westernism as the dominant narrative. Putin grasped the dominant anti-Western sentiment of Russians, the need to restore authority and a sense of collectivism, and applied the principles of pragmatic statism also to re-shape Russia's energy governance. Generally speaking, following the pragmatic statist narrative, energy policy should be developed to strengthen the Russian state and achieve national interests, and should not be used to enrich foreign oil and gas companies which, on the contrary, act to weaken the Russian state. The state decides buyers, market, pipelines, how quickly reserves should be developed, and it deals for exports. Therefore, Putin acted to restrict the intrusion of Western energy companies and reinvigorate the Russian state through its direct ownership of energy assets.

Russia's law on Subsoils is a good example of how legal decisions limit foreign companies' access to key Russian energy assets in favour of national champions. In particular, amendments to the Subsoil Law passed in 2008 established that only state companies would receive licences to develop the deposits in offshore fields.⁵⁸⁸ Regarding the influence and control of the Russian state over the energy sector, Putin approved a range of legislative initiatives aimed to reverse much of the energy sector privatisation of the 1990s (see below) and placed well-known 'figures of the presidential administration' at the head of Russia's main energy companies.⁵⁸⁹

Under Putin energy companies, such as Gazprom and Transneft were renationalized, foreign investments and presence restricted, as in the case of the forced renegotiation of oil and gas contracts with the foreign Shell and ExxonMobil. Through Gazprom, the Russian state acquired shares in projects managed in Russia by foreign companies as in the case of Sakhalin-2, the first Russian PSA⁵⁹⁰ signed in 1994 without a Russian partner. The project, which was of crucial relevance to Russian energy policy,⁵⁹¹ was the object of great criticism in Russia for environmental violations in 2005-2006. When in December 2005, foreign companies in charge of the project (e.g. Shell and Japanese

⁵⁸⁸ C., Locatelli, S., Rossiaud, Russia's Gas and Oil Policy: the Emerging Organizational and Institutional Framework for Regulating Access to Hydrocarbon Resources, *International Association for Energy Economics*, 2011, p.23.

⁵⁸⁹ S. L., Tkachenko, Actors in Russia's Energy Policy towards the EU, in Aalto, *The EU-Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe's Future Energy Security*, p.167

⁵⁹⁰ Production Sharing Agreement.

⁵⁹¹ The Sakhalin-2 project includes the first LNG plant in Russia.

partners) accepted Gazprom as majority stakeholder,⁵⁹² the environmental allegations disappeared.⁵⁹³ Another opportunity to reduce foreign presence in the Russian energy sector was offered by the cancellation of Russian antimonopoly regulations in 2007. This allowed the government to also acquire relevant shares in the main private Russian gas producers – such as Itera and Novatek – through Gazprom⁵⁹⁴ that gradually became an organic tool of the central government.

To construct pragmatic statism as the ‘dominant’ energy paradigm, Putin had to dislodge and discredit the competing views (paradigms) which downplayed Russian imperial ambition and promoted a new foreign policy in favour of opening Russia’s borders as a way to boost national interests and the economy. One aspects of such a competing view was, for example, evident in Khodorkovsky’s ambitions to transfer control over crucial strategic assets, including oil, outside Russia. Faced with such opposition, Putin used brutal measures to marginalize the competing view. Indeed, in 2005 Khodorkovsky was accused of tax fraud and condemned to a Siberian prison camp.⁵⁹⁵

From this initial account of Putin’s approach to energy policy, it emerges that the role of Gazprom has been designed compatibly with the doctrine of pragmatic statism. It is therefore important to detail its role in Russia’s energy governance. As a state-owned company, Gazprom controls most of Russia’s gas production and dominates foreign exports. It also accounts for around 85% of domestic gas production and controls domestic pipeline networks. Overall, Gazprom accounts for almost a third of overall state revenues. Given its crucial role for Russian economy, the government has constantly supported Gazprom’s expansion abroad and has used the company as its foreign policy tool. Flanked by the Kremlin, Gazprom aims to penetrate the gas markets of its neighbors in order to control export routes to Western consumers and create a situation of interdependence from which the Russian government can benefit on the political level. One way through which Gazprom gains control over the pipeline infrastructure of ex-Soviet states is by accepting the ownership of infrastructure networks as a compensation for the high debt that these countries have towards the

⁵⁹² Yergin, *The Quest: Energy, Security, and the Remaking of the Modern World*, pp.40-41

⁵⁹³ M., Elder, *Russia Looks to Control World's Gas Prices*, The Telegraph, 27 December 2008. Available from: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/energy/gas/3982543/Russia-look-to-control-worlds-gas-prices.html> Accessed 10/12/2013

⁵⁹⁴ Stegen, *Deconstructing the ‘energy weapon’: Russia's threat to Europe as case study*, p. 6507

⁵⁹⁵ Yergin, *The Quest: Energy, Security, and the Remaking of the Modern World*, p. 40

Kremlin. For example, in 2006 Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko endorsed Gazprom's inroads – channeled by the company RosUkrEnergo⁵⁹⁶ - into Ukraine's gas, oil and electricity infrastructure.⁵⁹⁷ Similarly, Gazprom cut off gas supply to Moldova in January 2006 after the former rejected Gazprom's request for a doubling of the price. Gazprom's re-establishment of supplies on 17 January 2006 occurred because of an agreement that allowed Gazprom 63.4% of MoldovaGaz's shares and control of Moldova's domestic gas infrastructure.⁵⁹⁸ In these instances, the state-owned Gazprom also guided the expansion of private Russian business into all foreign countries. Such a strategy of energy expansion in the 'near-abroad' complements the doctrine of pragmatic statism and reflects the historical theme – present in narratives such as slavophilism, panslavism, eurasianism – that promoted a Russian (Soviet) imperial vocation through control over Eastern Europe.

Another reason for the Kremlin to support Gazprom relates to the limited opportunity offered by the domestic market, which allows only modest price increases. Therefore, Gazprom prioritizes foreign exports from which it can relevantly grow. This is true especially in relation to Western Europe from which Gazprom receive more than 80% of its profits. Furthermore, the increase of the domestic demand combined with a fall in the overall Russian gas production, has strengthen the support of the Russian state and Gazprom since higher foreign reserves are needed. To address this situation, the Kremlin has backed Gazprom in concluding deals with Central Asia states and main African exporters such as Algeria. This strategy has also served the purpose of locking up reserves in producers regions which could become competitors of Gazprom in Western Europe.⁵⁹⁹

Overall, it emerges a clear strategy of the Russian state to prioritize the expansion of Gazprom abroad rather than engaging in more long-term and risky upstream production development projects. Also, the focus on promoting Russian capital and preserving Gazprom's monopoly highlight how holding power rather than modernization is the priority. The Russian Ministry of Economic Development and Trade has often advanced a competing view calling for market reforms in the Russian gas sector, including the

⁵⁹⁶ It is an energy company owned by 50% by Gazprom and another 50% by Swiss-registered private company Centragas Holding A.G..

⁵⁹⁷ Leonard, Popescu, *A power audit of Russia-EU relations*.

⁵⁹⁸ S., Woehrel, Russian Energy Policy Toward Neighboring Countries', *Congressional Research Service*, CRS Report for Congress, 2 September 2009, p.11. Available from: <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34261.pdf> Accessed 20/07/2013

⁵⁹⁹ Goldthau, Witte, *Global energy governance. The new rules of the game*. pp. 31-33

break-up of Gazprom and the encouragement of competition. Gazprom leadership has, however, rejected such a plan stressing the potential negative consequences to the security of domestic gas supply and national economy.⁶⁰⁰

Putin's understanding of the energy governance in Russia reflects his broader view of Russia's position in international affairs which is heavily permeated by the theme of sovereignty. In other words, the strategy of resource sovereignty – seen as a main economic policy to promote development and national security first – is instrumental to Russia's role in international arena. As he stated, the only way for Russia to reduce its gap with developed countries and achieve an economic growth of 4 to 6 % per year is via 'extraction, processing and exploitation of mineral raw resources'. This would make Russia 'a great economic power'.⁶⁰¹ The monopolization of supervision of national resources mainly through Gazprom unveils a tendency to establish pricing policies on natural gas, hence prioritizing national interests instead of following the course of international markets.⁶⁰² Thus, as Tsygankov mentioned, Putin's Russia rejected calls for complete globalization and liberalization of its energy market. However, it is worth mentioning that the current Russian policy based on state-controlled resources is similar to the economic policies adopted by EU member states during their period of industrialization.⁶⁰³

In addition, Putin's vision of international politics has added an anti-Western dimension to energy governance in Russia. As in a zero-sum game, EU's diversification plans are perceived to be driven by anti-Russian sentiment while the production of natural gas in the post-Soviet area by any company with a significant share of foreign capital (especially Western) could harm Russian economic and political sovereignty, and is, therefore threatening. Similarly, Putin's pragmatic statism advocates the view that monopoly is crucial to exert leverage in domestic and international politics and to improve Russia's relative position in the international arena. Only once Russia paid its foreign debts and gained budget surpluses could a slow opening of the Russian energy

⁶⁰⁰ OECD/IEA, *Energy Policies of IEA Countries: 2004 Review*, Paris, 2004, p.237

⁶⁰¹ V. Putin, Mineral natural resources in the strategy for development of the Russian economy, *Zapiski Gornogo Instituta*, as translated by H. Balzer, Vladimir Putin's academic writings, *Problems of Post-Communism*, Jan.–Feb., 2006, p. 49

⁶⁰² C. Kuzemko, A.V., Belyi, A. Goldthau, M. F., Keating, eds., *Dynamics of energy governance in Europe and Russia*, London: Palgrave, 2012, p. 50

⁶⁰³ A. Tsygankov, Vladimir Putin's vision of Russia as a normal great power, *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 21, No.2, pp. 132-158, quoted by Kuzemko, Belyi, Goldthau, Keating, *Dynamics of energy governance in Europe and Russia*

market to foreign companies be permitted. But this openness still excluded the possibility for a foreign company to entirely own Russian energy infrastructure. Russian capital, either private or state-controlled, should be prioritized. Any cooperation agreement between a foreign company and Russian companies should be limited to technological know-how on the condition of its transfer to Russia.⁶⁰⁴ If the aim is to acquire expertise, Russian companies can play the role of ‘learners’. But all relevant infrastructure projects must remain under state control. From this perspective, due to the high geopolitical importance, access to a pipeline should be possible for the Russian state and private operators, but access to foreign investors – which compete with Russian operators – is denied.

Against this background, it becomes clear that the EU’s attempt to dispossess Russia of its natural advantage, through, for example, the insistence on the Russian ratification of the ECT – which foresees unrestricted access to the Russian pipeline system for foreign capital⁶⁰⁵ – is not viable.

Furthermore, it can be noted how the historical theme of ‘exceptionalism’ that, as noted in chapter 3, is also present in Putin’s approach to energy. Asked if Russia could be defined as an energy superpower due to its high production and oil revenues, Putin rejected the term ‘superpower’ but added that:

‘I have never referred to Russia as an energy superpower. But we do have greater possibilities than almost any other country in the world. If put together, Russia’s energy potential in all areas, oil, gas, and nuclear, our country is unquestionably the leader’.⁶⁰⁶

Along with exceptionalism, europeanism/westernism represented the other component of Putin’s pragmatic statism. When internal debates called for ‘modernization’ through investments, and adequate technology for the development of ‘next generation’ fields located in the Arctic regions off Russia’s northern coast, Putin’s Russia realized the need for an international partner. As a result, Rosneft signed a partnership with

⁶⁰⁴ M., Delyagin, Assessing Russia’s Energy Doctrine, *Russia in Global Affairs*, Vol.4, No.4, 2006, pp.139-140

⁶⁰⁵ Delyagin, Ibidem

⁶⁰⁶ A., Stent, An Energy Superpower in K.Campbell, and J., Price, eds., *The Politics of Global Energy*, Washington, DC:Aspen Institute, 2008, quoted by Yergin, *The quest: energy, security, and the remaking of the modern world*, p. 41

ExxonMobil in March 2012 for the development of the oil and gas fields in the Arctic. Deputy Prime Minister, Igor Sechin, stated that the project went beyond the 'over-politicization' and 'historic stereotypes that hampered' the US-West relationship and the deal was denoted as offering a 'big windows of opportunity'. As confirmation of the principle of reciprocity, Rosnet obtained 30% shares in various on - and offshore ExxonMobil projects in the US and Canada.⁶⁰⁷ These examples epitomize the balance in Putin's approach between the two competing visions of his pragmatic statism: exceptionalism/eurasianism and Europeanism/westernism.

This balance is also telling of Russia's temporal identity. The emphasis on statism marks a need to consolidate the Russian state and thus, it can be read through the schemes of 'repetition' or 'stasis', whereas cooperation with Western companies is indicative of a need for 'change' and 'development' towards modernization. Similarly, the balance between exceptionalism/eurasianism and Europeanism/westernism also demonstrates how the 'degree of Otherness' can vary. The 'West' can be represented as a 'partner' or as a 'threat' to expel from national borders or the ex-Soviet space. Indeed, the construction of the spatial identity of Russia as a 'European' actor operating in a separated or united 'Europe' depends on these very representations.

A wide 'degree of Otherness' with a consequent representation of the 'West' as a negative 'Other' can also be noted in the veiled threat that Russia makes to Western European consumers to switch supply to less troublesome consumers in other regions. The Foreign Policy Concept (FPC) in 2008 made various references to energy focusing on the need to strengthen ties with India and China and with countries of the CSTO and SCO.⁶⁰⁸ This was accompanied by opposition towards the (Western-orientated) European security structure:

'The reaction to the prospect of loss by the historic West of its monopoly in global processes finds its expression, in particular, in the continued political and psychological policy of "containing" Russia, including the use of a selective approach to history, for those purposes, first of all as regards World War Two

⁶⁰⁷ Yergin, *The quest: energy, security, and the remaking of the modern world*, pp.42-43

⁶⁰⁸ Acronyms of Collective Security Treaty Organization and Shanghai Cooperation Organization. See M., De Haas, *Medvedev's Security Policy: A Provisional Assessment*, *Russian Analytical Digest*, No.62, Research Centre for East European Studies, 2009, pp. 2-3

and the postwar period'.⁶⁰⁹

In particular, similarly to the neo-Eurasianist narrative that promotes the discourse of a Russian empire through further cooperation with 'greater' Eurasia (e.g. post-Soviet Russia, continental Islamic states, China, India, Eastern Europe) and against Western hegemony, the FPC calls for Moscow to look at other non-Western allies for its energy projects rather than at the West.⁶¹⁰

'To enhance its interaction with the States of the Islamic world, Russia will take advantage of its participation as an observer in the work of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States, and play an active role in implementing the G8 Partnership with the Broader Middle East and North Africa Region. Priority attention will be paid to developing mutually beneficial economic cooperation, in particular in the energy sector, with countries of this region, which is of strategic importance to Russia's national interests'.⁶¹¹

Under the presidency of Dmitry Medvedev energy continued to be understood in geopolitical terms. The policy document 'Russia's National Security Strategy' issued in 2009 describes competition over energy security as a potential source of threat and tension, which could lead to the use of military force near Russian borders:

'Sources of threats to national security could include factors such as...competition over insufficient raw materials, energy... which increase strategic risks associated with dependence on changes in external factors'.⁶¹²

Regarding energy relations with the EU, the geopolitical tone of the Russian approach lies in the fact that Russia's main political objective is to de-monopolise the EU's attempt to impose itself as a model for the energy governance in Europe.

⁶⁰⁹ D., Medvedev, *The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation*, President of Russia, Official Web Portal, 12 July 2008. Available from: <http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/text/docs/2008/07/204750.shtml> Accessed 12/09/2013

⁶¹⁰ De Haas, *Medvedev's Security Policy: A Provisional Assessment*, *Russian Analytical Digest*

⁶¹¹ Medvedev, *The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation*.

⁶¹² RusTrans, *Russia's National Security Strategy to 2020*, 12 May 2009. Available from: <http://rustrans.wikidot.com/russia-s-national-security-strategy-to-2020> Accessed 20/07/2013

For example, at the basis of Putin's opposition to the Third Energy Package there is a tendency to perceive it as an EU attempt to own the exclusive right to define what is a good practice in energy governance by excluding Russia from being a norm-setter on the European continent. Commenting on the Package that prevents suppliers from also owning a distribution network (e.g. Gazprom), Putin said:

‘We often hear from our partners both in Europe and North America: ‘If you want to be members of a global family of civilized nations, you should behave in a civilized way.’ What is this then? Have our colleagues forgotten the basic principles?’.⁶¹³

In Putin's view, the Package – allegedly aiming to liberalize the continent's energy market – hinders investments and is ultimately an ‘uncivilized’ measure.⁶¹⁴ In addition, Russia's unwillingness to commit to the EU's rules-based approach to energy cooperation, and its rejection of multilateral structures of governance such as the ECT, epitomizes Russia's realist focus on protecting her national interests in an environment hostile to her (RE paradigm) and the historical narrative of the West as an entity intending to harm Russian interests.⁶¹⁵

Here, it can be noted how the representation of ‘foreign’ and ‘Western’ seems to refer to a threatening entity aiming to weaken the Russian state. This not only indicates a high ‘degree of Otherness’ but also contributes to grasp the role of outsiders in the development of a Russian energy paradigm along a geopolitical reasoning (constitutive power of outsiders).

However, Putin's discourse on Russia's external energy policy has been discursively portrayed as economically and not politically driven. While the 2006 gas dispute between Gazprom and Ukraine – Russia's main eastern European transit in 2006 – has been widely reported in Western Europe as an example of Russia's use of energy for geopolitical reasons, there is uncertainty on whether the Russian approach followed

⁶¹³ G., Bryanski, *Putin Says EU Energy Laws are Uncivilised 'Robbery'*, Reuters, 26 November 2010. Available from: <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2010/11/26/russia-germany-putin-idUKLDE6AP11O20101126> Accessed 20/12/2013

⁶¹⁴ A., Anishchuk, *Russia's Putin Says EU Energy Law is Uncivilized*, Reuters, 21 December 2010. Available from: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/21/us-russia-eu-energy-idUSBRE8BK0WA20121221> Accessed 20/07/2013

⁶¹⁵ Pick, *EU-Russia energy relations: A critical analysis*. p.346

political or economic calculations. The crisis was due to Russia's increase in gas prices for Ukraine; Russia's claims that Ukraine was not paying for gas and was diverting gas from Russia to the EU from pipelines that crossed the Ukrainian territory, and referred to a disagreement over transit fees for gas transported to EU markets via Ukraine. After unsuccessful negotiations, Russia shut down gas supplies to Ukraine on 1st January 2006. Given that almost 80% of the Russian gas imported by the EU passed through pipelines crossing Ukrainian territory, the cuts resulted in decreased supply to the EU.⁶¹⁶ The Russia–Ukraine 2006 transit dispute ended when Kiev agreed to abandon attempts to circumvent the Russian monopoly over the transport and marketing of Central Asian gas to Europe. Although Russia's decision to cut gas can be read as political response to Ukraine's Western European choice in the Orange Revolution, economic reasons should also be considered.⁶¹⁷ Factors also related to prices and debts might also lead us to think that the Russian move was economically driven.

All in all, this instance questions the assumption that the Russian understanding of energy security has been only interpreted in a (neo)realist fashion.

Drawing from this example, other instances demonstrate that Putin's Russia viewed energy security through a neoliberal lens. Indeed, Putin's has often referred to cooperation as necessary to guarantee a multilateral framework in international energy. For example, the document 'Energy Strategy of Russia for the Period up to 2030' strengthened the principles of multilateralism and called for Russia to pursue the following objectives:

‘active participation in international negotiation processes on energy issues, provision of balance between interests of importers, exporters and transitters of energy resources in international treaties and international organizations’.⁶¹⁸

The document adds that Russia should coordinate its energy policy and ensure:

‘...development of energy cooperation with the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Eurasian Economic Union, North-Eastern Asia, Shanghai

⁶¹⁶ Pick, *EU-Russia energy relations: A critical analysis*, p.328

⁶¹⁷ Pick, *EU-Russia energy relations: A critical analysis*, pp.328-329

⁶¹⁸ Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation, *Energy Strategy of Russia for the period up to 2030*, 13 November 2009, pp.57-58. Available from: [http://www.energystrategy.ru/projects/docs/ES-2030_\(Eng\).pdf](http://www.energystrategy.ru/projects/docs/ES-2030_(Eng).pdf) Accessed 08/10/2013

Cooperation Organization, and European Union as well as with other international organizations and countries... coordination of activity on world oil and gas markets with the countries-members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and the Gas Exporting Countries Forum’⁶¹⁹

Finally, it also calls for ‘assistance in developing the united European-Russian-Asian energy area’.⁶²⁰

Overall, this second part of chapter 4 demonstrated that, although geopolitics has often driven Russia’s understanding of energy security, evidence of neo-liberal principles exist. History shows how Western concepts such as privatization and market-based reforms and state-centric approaches have alternated in the Russian energy sector. The interaction with Western Europe / EU and the West also accounts for this alternation. The ‘Western Other’ has either triggered a cooperative discourse (e.g. cooperation in the Baku and Volga oil fields and Yeltsin’s privatization programmes) or a confrontational one (restriction of investments of Western companies in Russian energy sector, opposition to the Third Package).

6 Conclusion

This chapter was based on the notion that it is neither geopolitics (RE) alone, nor solely market-based calculations (MI) that determine the structure of an actor’s energy paradigm. Thus, given the various discourses utilized by the EC and Russia at different levels – internal, external and regional – geopolitics and the economic element are often intertwined. Instead, reasoning through a clear-cut divide and the assumptions of the conventional constructivist literature about the difference in the nature of the EU and Russia seems inappropriate and not adequately explored. Unlike the state-centrism of the conventional constructivist tradition, the discursive contestation occurring in the internal dimension holds explanatory power to account for the difference / sameness in actors’ energy policies. In addition, the EC – mainly in its external action – and

⁶¹⁹ Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation, Ibidem

⁶²⁰ Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation, Ibidem

individual MSs have proved to adhere to the same geopolitical logics that Russia seemed to use at times in its energy governance. Similarly, claims in favour of cooperation, multilateralism and willingness to adopt liberal principles have also informed Russia's debate on energy paradigms.

Differently from existing accounts, this chapter also highlights how the narrative-based background – which detected the various historical Self's representations in relation to the 'Other' (see previous chapter) – and the emphasis on the 'degree of Otherness' – which explains how alien can be the detected 'Other' – help better to understand the alternation between the MI and RE. From this perspective, this analysis conceptualizes EU-Russia energy relation as a discursive encounter. Existing discourse-based accounts⁶²¹ reject the materialism of rationalism by focusing on social factors such as discourses. They also overcome the state-centrism of conventional constructivism since they explore the degree of discursive contestation occurring within the actors' internal debate. Yet, these accounts remain one-sided because discourses are either investigated within the EU or within Russia but never put in interactive perspective. The role of the Self / Other discursive encounter and 'Otherness' in the policy field of energy is neglected. As a result, the constitutive role of outside is understated.

The section on the Russian energy paradigm has demonstrated how the MI and RE energy paradigm have alternated in Russia in the last two decades. The 1990s witnessed a genuine de-politicisation of energy since trade and relations with the Western bloc – including the then ECC – became increasingly marketised and institutionalized. Within the post-perestroika period and the collapse of the USSR, the Kremlin acted to privatize its energy assets as part of a larger process of 'shock therapy' accepted by the Russian political leadership on the prescriptions of Western governments. In short, in the earlier post-Soviet period, liberal ideas prevailed and the transition reforms were largely designed in accordance with a pro-Western orientation.

In the mid 2000s, however, problems for the liberal institutionalist model started to surface. Russia's shift away from the MI paradigm was interpreted as the return of the West's old enemy. By joining the Western model and starting to privatize and liberalize

⁶²¹ See for example Natorski and Herranz Surrallés, *Securitizing Moves to Nowhere? The Framing of the European Union's Energy Policy*; Khasson, *Discourses and Interests in EU-Russia Energy Relations*; Kuzemko, *Ideas Power and Change: Explaining EU–Russia Energy Relation*

its energy sector, Russia had dismissed other courses of development and endorsed the belief that there were no plausible alternatives to the Western energy model.

Conversely, with Putin's pragmatic policy, the re-nationalization wave, and the economic boost supported by high oil prices, Russia started formulating more ambitious political and geopolitical goals.⁶²²

However, when increased tensions with the West and economic difficulties occurred, pragmatic statism – which in turn combines Eurasianism/exceptionalism and Westernism/Europeanism – became the authoritative and dominant narrative informing the policy-making process.

On one side, Putin's foreign policy towards Russia's 'near-abroad' entailed strong geopolitical considerations including a feeling of rivalry with the EU with a consequent negative image of the West plotting against Russia's interests. Such competition has often revolved around the issue of energy security.

At the same time, the acceptance of the EU-Russian ED as a recognized platform to cooperate with the EC on issues such as energy efficiency and renewable energy epitomizes Putin's adherence also to a pro-Western narrative.

The ambivalence of Russian foreign energy policy between liberalism and realism is also reflected in Russian energy relations towards the EU. It can be noted how this ambivalence reproduces the competition of historical narratives such as westernism/europeanism and slavophilism/exceptionalism⁶²³ which has been a constant in Russian historical debate on its identity. For example, on one side, in its relations with the EU, Russia has demonstrated a spatial understanding of Europe as a unitary continent and a positive perception of Western Europe (e.g. by adhering to the EU-Russia ED, which is a platform for cooperation on energy issues). On the other side, the rejection of the EU-sponsored ECT and the launch of the South Stream pipeline – which is presented as a much simpler and more secure alternative to the EU-sponsored Nabucco – can be read as Russia's competing project over 'Europe' and ultimately it

⁶²² Shadrina, *Russia's Foreign Energy Policy: Norm, Ideas and Driving Dynamics*, p.30

⁶²³ Shadrina, *Russia's Foreign Energy Policy: Norm, Ideas and Driving Dynamics*, p.14

Europeanists argue that to reach a level of economic development similar to the West's, Russia should renounce to its traditional Great Power politics and focus on solving internal economic problems. Conversely, eurasianists argue that the collapse of the USSR in 1991 generated a scenario in which Russia's security is challenged at multiple fronts. Thus, by including elements of both the West (Euro-Atlantic) and the East (Asia-Pacific), eurasianism represents the only policy strategy more appropriate to address uncertainties and potential threats.

reveals a negative understanding of the West - seen as a threat to Russia's interests.

Furthermore, from the section on Russia it emerges how political emphasis has been put on the central role for the state in energy management. Once again the historical analysis conducted in the previous chapter provided the appropriate background to understand the reason for this. In fact, Russia has a long history of state-centric rule as well as of socialist, or as it was known earlier 'collectivist', thinking. It is important to consider such cultural aspects when examining the political economy of energy in Russia since this embraces beliefs that still underpin Russia's politics today. In this respect, it can be argued that in Russia, for historical reasons, economic nationalism and collectivist ideas are acceptable practices as well as the centralization of energy supply and the concentration of control.

Similarly, the section on EU energy security aimed to outline the main themes that guided the energy paradigms adopted by MSs, the EP and the EC in its internal and external dimensions and in its relations with Russia. As for the internal dimension, it has been demonstrated that the EC and the EP emerged as the staunch promoter of energy cooperation and integration while MSs advance a competing nationalist paradigm. As a result, the EU's internal energy policy has long been characterized by oscillation and contestation between state and market-driven models of governance. However, this was due to the lack of power of the EC to mitigate state-centric positions of MSs.

As for the external energy dimension, the EC's approach turns more geopolitical and thus, it falls within an RE paradigm. Although the EC rejects realist geopolitics as a basis for energy security, it was demonstrated that behind the liberal principle a more geopolitical dimension is concealed as the case of the ECT, 2006 Green Paper, 'An External Policy to Serve Europe's Energy' and the Strategic Energy Review showed. Closer analyses of these policy documents illustrated how the EC's stated approach to energy security in relations with Russia and other third countries reveals the intention to spread values inspiring the EU's internal logics. This indicates that the EC's understanding of relations with Russia (and other neighbours) remains along the 'teacher-learner' historical narrative.

In addition, the fact that Russia has often opposed the universal Western standards, rejecting the ECT and cutting energy supply to its neighboring countries, generated the image of Russia as the 'bad learner', a theme that has often recurred throughout the

history of West-Russia relations. As a result, each Russian decision on energy that failed to meet the expectations of the partners in the West (EC and some MSs), consequently fuelled the Western representation of Russia as an actor using its 'energy weapon' to pursue its foreign policy objectives. Similarly, the pragmatic energy policy implemented by Putin is conceived in Western Europe as the aspiration of an underdeveloped state to become a greater power. This recalls the nineteenth century Western European image of Russia as attempting to achieve hegemony in the Concert of Europe using the manners of a 'barbarian at the gate'. However, along with the learner-teacher theme, the ED (see chapter 6) has also demonstrated how elements of an egalitarian / cooperative narrative is at work. In the context of the ED, the EC tells, in fact, the story of cooperation and integration.

In the light of this analysis, the following chapters (5 and 6) will contribute to building layer three. In doing so, these chapters will aim to test the layered structure of meaning made up of historical narratives (layer one) and policy paradigms (e.g. energy, layer two). The overall aim is to demonstrate how historical narratives in Russia and in the Western Europe (layer one) and the EU's and Russia's understanding of energy security (layer two) can help illustrate the political implications underlying the debates over the Nabucco/South Stream pipeline and the EU-Russia ED.

Chapter 5 - Building Layer Three: Analysing Nabucco and South Stream Pipeline through a Discursive Approach

1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on layer three of the Wæverian structure of meaning. As noted, this layer switches the analysis from general discursive structure resulting from layers one and two, to the concrete performance (discursive practices) of such a structure in the context of the energy relations between the EU and Russia. In other words, layer three moves from macro-historical narratives and energy paradigms (layers one and two) to their practical performance in relation to the case studies in the context of EU-Russia energy relations. As such, the impact of historical narratives and energy paradigms will be now scrutinized through the analysis of a situation inherent to EU-Russia energy relations: the debate around the Nabucco and South Stream pipeline projects.

Layer three is mainly constructed through language and symbolic acts. As said, discourse analysis includes a number of approaches that focus on written, vocal, or symbolic use of language in any significant semiotic event. Political discourse analysis is one among various discourse analyses and specifically focuses on the discourses spoken in political forms (such as debates, speeches). This thesis aims to construct political discourses by focusing on written text, speeches as well as on the symbolic nature of discourse. In particular, symbolic acts have the communicative effects of materializing discourses. It follows that discourses and symbolic acts are interrelated. A mere act does not have an objective meaning. What allows an act to acquire significance is the discursive background⁶²⁴. In other words, through this discursive structure the meaning of symbolic actions goes beyond the mere reading of a written text. There is instead a deeper meaning and discursive constructions that should be read in light of a given context.⁶²⁵

From this perspective and with the layered structure of analysis in mind, the proposed approach combines context, texts, speeches and symbolic meaning to explain the

⁶²⁴ An official visit on a specific day (e.g. national day), is an example of a symbolic act.

⁶²⁵ L., Heracleous, R.J., Marshak, Conceptualizing Organizational Discourse as Situated Symbolic Action, *Human Relations*, Vol. 57, No. 10, 2004, pp. 1285–1312. Available from : http://www.heracleous.org/uploads/1/1/2/9/11299865/hum_rel_-_disc_as_situated_symb_action.pdf
Accessed 20/07/2013

politics of the South Stream / Nabucco pipelines.

The Nabucco pipeline is included within a EU programme (Trans-European Networks – Energy, TEN-E) that confers to the project a strategic importance. Its objectives are to improve the connection of the EU to the natural gas sources in the Caspian Sea and the Middle East regions as well as to decrease the EU's dependence on Russian sources (currently the largest EU's supplier) by diversifying EU's current energy supplies.

In 2006, Gazprom proposed an alternative project – South Stream – to enhance European energy security. South Stream is presented as consistent with the strategy on diversifying the Russian routes of gas supplies to the EU.

While both parties play the diversification discourse, the two projects present a different perspective. Through Nabucco, the EU aims to diversify the range of its suppliers (read less Russian supply), whilst through South Stream, Gazprom aims to keep its role as main supplier of the EU and to diversify the routes.

Rationalist accounts have tried to interpret the approaches of the EU and Russia in the Nabucco-South Stream politics as advancing an interest-based argument⁶²⁶. In this respect, these approaches have assumed the thesis of 'a zero sum' conflict and the concept of the geopolitics of pipelines. In the broader literature on EU-Russia energy relations, the liberal-institutionalist-inspired approach advanced by authors such as Warkotsch and Monaghan⁶²⁷ hold that conflict events are caused by cognitive rather than ideological factors, that is, they originate from (mis)perceptions and (mis)understandings, rather than discursive contestation for hegemony, as this chapter aims to argue.

Baev and Overland reject both a geopolitical and pure rationalist reading of the pipeline politics. They rather aim to assess the feasibility of the Nabucco and South Stream –

⁶²⁶ J., Mankoff, *Eurasian Energy Security*, CFR, Council Special Report, No.43, February 2009, p.179
See also Baran, Z., *Security Aspects of the South Stream Project*, Center for Eurasian Policy, Briefing Paper requested by the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs, 2008, p.25. Available from: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/note/afet/2008/388962/EXPO-AFET_NT\(2008\)388962_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/note/afet/2008/388962/EXPO-AFET_NT(2008)388962_EN.pdf) Accessed 27/08/2013

See also D., Freifeld, *The Great Pipeline Opera*, *Foreign Policy*, Vol.174, 2009, p.122
T., Varol, *The Russian Energy Policy*, Republic of Macedonia: EGALITE, ESI – European Scientific Institute, 2013.

⁶²⁷ R., Gotz, *Energy Cooperation. The Southern Gas Transport Corridor in A.*, Warkotsch, eds., *The European Union and Central Asia*, Oxon-New York :Routledge, 2011, pp.158-189
See also A., Monaghan, *Russia-EU Relations: An Emerging Energy Security Dilemma*, *Pro et Contra*, No.10, 2006. Available from: <http://carnegieendowment.org/files/EmergingDilemma1.pdf> Accessed 13/12/2013

considered as ‘mega-project’ – by looking at actors’ motivation.⁶²⁸

Overall, existing accounts fail to explore how the alleged conflictual dispositions of actors and their motivations unfold through communication. This is not to say that the reason for conflict is necessarily discursive in origin, but that the geopolitical, economic or cultural factors become interactive and accessible when they are communicated in discourses.⁶²⁹

As a general rule, all these accounts neglect the importance of historical representations and how they are reflected in actors’ discursive interaction. By extensively focusing on the conflict of interests and misperceptions in such pipeline politics, these approaches also fail to grasp the deeper implications on identity construction, resulting in a specific representation of the counterpart as the ‘Other’. This chapter aims to fill this gap by framing interests within discourses which, in turn, are indicative of a specific representation of the Other who can be, for example, a partner or a ‘threat’ depending on the ‘degree of Otherness’.

In short, this chapter explains the politics of the Nabucco and South Stream through the mutual representation held by the EU and Russia in their discourses.

In addition, the proposed account focuses on the meaning of the Nabucco and South Stream pipeline for the political construction of ‘Europe’, and on the mutual construction of the EU and Russia as ‘European’ actors.

Through the layered structure of meaning it will be demonstrated that the narratives evident in layers one and two are actually operative in the pipeline debate on Nabucco and South Stream. Findings should confirm the hypothesis that EU and Russian discourses in this pipeline debate evoke historical narratives (layer one) and ultimately reflect the energy paradigms adopted by the two actors (layer two). The first section briefly describes the technicalities of the Nabucco and South Stream projects (route, participants etc.) and the politics around the two pipelines.

A section follows that aims to map the discursive landscape beginning with the non-

⁶²⁸ K., P., Baev, and I., Overland, The South Stream versus Nabucco Pipeline Race: Geopolitical and Economical (ir)rationales and Political Stakes in Mega Projects, *International Affairs*, Vol. 86, No. 5, 2010, pp. 1077. Available from: http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/International%20Affairs/2010/86_5baev_overland.pdf Accessed 20/09/2013

⁶²⁹ Prozorov, *Understanding Conflict between Russia and the EU*, p.21

threatening and conciliatory discursive practices advanced by the EU and Russia. As demonstrated in chapter 3, this narrative field describes a positive scenario for West/Western European-Russian relations, which are based on the principles of cooperation, equality and belonging to the same European continent.

Conversely, the subsequent section brings evidence to the discursive practice – typical of the Cold War – of discrediting the feasibility of the counterpart's projects, and that evokes the historical dichotomy of 'true/false' Europe. The historical themes of exceptionalism and messianism are also encountered, especially in statements made by Russian representatives.

Subsequently, the analysis turns to the examination of symbolic acts carried out mainly by Russian officials (such as strategic official visits in key transit countries on a symbolic day) attesting the existence of competing logics at work, as opposed to the claimed non-exclusive and conciliatory stance. Against this background, it will be illustrated that, for example, the employment of the conventional representation of 'Russia as a threatening Other', and the Europeanisation language found in the official discursive practice of the EC, contribute to explain Russian discursive reaction.

2 The Politics of the Nabucco and South Stream Pipeline Projects

As noted, this first section describes the technicalities of the Nabucco and South Stream projects (route, participants etc.) and the politics around the two pipelines.

The increasing reliance on oil and gas imports is one of the main energy challenges on the EU's agenda. For this reason, the EU has a great interest in an efficient oil and gas market and infrastructure. Transportation of natural gas poses a further challenge, as it is limited and inflexible.⁶³⁰ Moreover, given gas supply disruptions, the EC was concerned that Europe's energy networks might no longer provide secure energy supply. This led the EU to move security of supply to the top of its agenda.⁶³¹ In particular, security of gas supply was defined in a Commission Communication as 'the availability

⁶³⁰ Oil transport infrastructure is less problematic given that oil is often transported by alternative transport means such as tankers

⁶³¹ J., Bjørnmoose, F., Roca, T., Turgot, D., Smederup Hansen, *Gas and Oil Pipeline in Europe*, Briefing Paper requested by European Parliament's Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, 2009, p.3.

Available from:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/document/activities/cont/201106/20110628ATT22856/20110628ATT22856EN.pdf> Accessed 12/02/2013

of gas to users at affordable prices'.⁶³²

Another reason why the EU perceives the availability at risk lies in the fact that gas supply depends on few countries (Russia, North Africa and Middle East), some of which are unstable and exposed to elevated geopolitical risks. Supply and pipeline transmission from these countries can be threatened by internal conflicts, (such as interstate wars, embargos and terrorism). This contributed to shaping a perception that gas transportation often runs through vulnerable pipeline routes.⁶³³

Against this background, the EU adopted a strategy aiming to review the existing oil and gas infrastructures, and decrease the vulnerability to gas supply from few countries through supply diversification. In particular, the transportation infrastructure – including oil and gas pipelines – play a crucial role in the interdependent relationship with Russia, which is the EU's main supplier. In light of this, the Nord Stream pipeline⁶³⁴, for example, has been labeled as a project of 'European interest' in the guidelines on TEN-E.⁶³⁵ Other pipeline projects discussed were Yamal II and the Amber project.⁶³⁶

However, from a EU perspective, the existing and projected routes are subject to political and economic power play, which might destabilize their functioning. Crisis in transit countries (e.g. Ukraine in 2006 and 2009 and Belarus in 2007) triggered concerns in the EU about the stability of oil and gas exports from Russia. This, in turn, triggered a growing perception that Russia is becoming an unreliable supplier or is using its dominant position to pursue its geopolitical objectives in the ex-Soviet space. As a reaction, the EU has begun to advance the need for diversification of energy suppliers.⁶³⁷ The EU has, thus, reconsidered its infrastructure policy with a global vision, adding Central Asia and the Caucasus suppliers to Russia. The reason behind this strategy is the belief that in order to enhance the EU's energy security, it is important to diversify not only transportation routes but also the sources of energy supply.

Under the Green Paper for the Trans-European Energy Networks a new pipeline strategy emerged: 'some of the main pipelines serving Europe's customers are

⁶³² Committee of Regions on the Directive 2004/67/EC of 26 April 2004 concerning measures to safeguard the security of natural gas supply, COM (2008c), 13 November. Available from: <http://eurlex.europa.eu/Notice.do?mode=dbl&lang=en&ihmlang=en&lng1=en.en&lng2=bg.cs.da.de.el.en.es.et.fi.fr.hu.it.lt.lv.mt.nl.pl.pt.ro.sk.sl.sv.&val=483617:cs> Accessed 12/02/2013

⁶³³ Bjørnmoose, Roca, Turgot, Smederup Hansen, *Gas and Oil Pipeline in Europe*, p. 19

⁶³⁴ Nord Stream also aims to diversify transportation routes.

⁶³⁵ Trans-European Networks - Energy

⁶³⁶ Labelled as a project of common interest in the TEN-E guidelines

⁶³⁷ Bjørnmoose, Roca, Turgot, Smederup Hansen, *Gas and Oil Pipeline in Europe*, pp. 24-25

overstretched or in need for maintenance. New import routes, notably from Central Asia and the Caspian as well as from the Middle East and Africa, will also be needed'.⁶³⁸

The decision to back the Nabucco pipeline falls within the EU's diversification strategy as a way to decrease overreliance on Russia and increase security of supply.⁶³⁹ In fact, Nabucco would completely bypass Russia, offering a new export route and new gas supply from the Caspian and Middle Eastern regions. With an approximate budget of EUR 8 billion, the Nabucco project is a private initiative supported by OMV (Austria), FGSZ Ltd. (Hungary), Transgaz (Romania), Bulgarian Energy Holding (Bulgaria), Botas (Turkey), and RWE (Germany).⁶⁴⁰ Although the EU is not a shareholder⁶⁴¹, the Nabucco project has gained significant political and financial support from the EU⁶⁴², which sees it as a strategic tool in securing access to Caspian and Middle Eastern gas supplies in the context of the Southern Corridor Initiative.⁶⁴³ As such, the EU's TEN-E programme – which lists projects eligible for Community assistance⁶⁴⁴ - designated the

⁶³⁸ Commission of the European Communities, *Green Paper - Towards a secure, sustainable and competitive european energy network*

⁶³⁹ Baev, and Overland, *The South Stream versus Nabucco Pipeline Race: Geopolitical and Economical (ir)rationales and Political Stakes in Mega Projects*, p. 1077

⁶⁴⁰ Nabucco-Pipeline Website, FAQ Section. Available from: <http://www.nabucco-pipeline.com/portal/page/portal/en/safety/faq> Accessed on 15 January 2013

⁶⁴¹ As European Commissioner for Energy, Gunther Oettinger, recalled in answering a Parliamentary question entitled 'Nabucco, South Stream, and Synergies in the Southern Corridor: *'The EU as such is not a party to any pipeline projects; these are implemented by private companies'*'. See European Council, Reply to Parliamentary Question E-001798/2011, 20 June 2011. Available from: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-001798&language=EN> Accessed 20/09/2013

⁶⁴² In his answer to another Parliamentary question Oettinger specifies that: *'The Commission continues to support the Southern Corridor, of which Nabucco is one possible pipeline project'*. (See word doc. on the right side) Oettinger, G., Parliamentary Questions E-010627/2010. Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission, 28 January 2011. Available from:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2010-010627&language=EN> Accessed 20/09/2013.

In another official intervention, Mr. Oettinger expressed the intention of the European Commission to financially support the Nabucco project: *'As far as financial support to Nabucco is concerned, the European Energy Programme for Recovery (EPR) allowed the Commission to allocate EUR 200 million to the project'*. See Oettinger, G., Parliamentary Questions E-005505/2012. Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission, 16 July 2012. Available from:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-005505&language=EN> Accessed 20/09/2013

⁶⁴³ For the official document on the launch of the Southern Corridor Initiative see Commission of the European Communities, Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Second Strategic Energy Review. An EU Energy Security and Solidarity Action Plan, COM(2008a), 13 November. Available from: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0781:FIN:EN:PDF> Accessed 21/09/2013

⁶⁴⁴ See for example, DG Energy Website, Energy Infrastructure. Trans-European Energy Networks (TEN-E). Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/tent_e/ten_e_en.htm Accessed 15/01/2013

Nabucco pipeline as a project of strategic importance.⁶⁴⁵ The US also welcomed the decision of the governments of Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria to sign the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Nabucco pipeline project.⁶⁴⁶ In the light of European and US support, this chapter assumes that the Nabucco pipeline enjoys Western support.

On the Russian side, the most important alternative to Nabucco has been the South Stream pipeline project planned to transport Russian natural gas to Western Europe. Given the EU's intention to build Nabucco without Russian involvement and the growing tensions with transit states, South Stream is of political – as well as economic – importance to Russia. The South Stream pipeline was designed to undermine the monopoly position of Ukraine as a transit country for gas supplies and ensure that Western Europe continues to receive a large proportion of its gas from Russia. The Russian strategy is to combine North Stream and South Stream into an integrated energy supply network which will make Western Europe immune to the consequences of Kiev's and Minsk's unpredictability.

The South Stream project was announced in 2007 when the CEO of Italian energy company Eni, Paolo Scaroni, and the Vice-Chairman of Russian Gazprom, Alexander Medvedev, signed in Rome a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the construction of South Stream.⁶⁴⁷ Currently, the four shareholders of the South Stream consortium are Gazprom (Russia, 50%), Eni (Italy, 20%), EDF (France, 15%), and Wintershall – a BASF subsidiary (Germany, 15%).⁶⁴⁸ The South Stream route includes an offshore section across the Black Sea and an on-shore section crossing various

⁶⁴⁵ In the Activity Report of the European Coordinator on the TEN-E it is reported that: '*The European Union has designated (...) three of the pipelines as of strategic importance (ITGI, Nabucco and White Stream)*'. See J., Van AArtsen, Activity Report, September 2007 - February 2009, Project of European interest n° NG 3, 4 February 2009, p.7. Available from:

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/tent_e/doc/axis/2009_axis_linking_activity_report_2007_2009.pdf Accessed 5/5/2013

⁶⁴⁶ In an official note, it is reported that: '*We congratulate the governments of Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria on the July 13 signing of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Nabucco pipeline project. This Agreement is a significant milestone in achieving our shared vision of opening a new energy corridor that will bring Caspian gas to Europe.*' See US Department of State, Signing Ceremony for the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Nabucco Pipeline, Press Statement, 2009. Available from:

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/july/125968.htm>

⁶⁴⁷ ENI, *Eni and Gazprom Sign the Agreement for the South Stream Project*, ENI Press Release, 2007.

Available from: http://www.eni.com/en_IT/media/press-releases/2007/06/Eni_and_Gazprom_sign_the_agree_23.06.2007.shtml Accessed 20/09/ 2013

⁶⁴⁸ The South Stream Transport Consortium's Website, *The Combined Know-how of Four Major Companies, South Stream*. Available from: <http://www.south-stream-offshore.com/about-us/shareholders/> Accessed 20/07/2013

European states. In particular, the gas pipeline is planned to transmit gas from West Siberia via Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Hungary and Slovenia to Italy.⁶⁴⁹ In terms of costs, South Stream will likely be the most expensive pipeline in the world, as the estimated cost of its construction is EUR 19–26 billion.⁶⁵⁰

The two pipeline projects have relevant similarities and differences. One of the most important differences between Nabucco and South Stream is in ownership; Nabucco is financed from the private sector, and thus needs to be commercially workable, while South Stream's main stakeholder is the state-owned Gazprom.⁶⁵¹ The two projects have shared participants, as is the case with OMV, which has a leading role in South Stream, as well as Nabucco. Also, three of the five countries through which Nabucco would pass⁶⁵² are included in the South Stream project too: Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria. As such, the two pipelines might be seen as 'competing' for the same financing resources in the target states.⁶⁵³

Moreover, in supporting their projects, both the EU and Russia put great emphasis on the diversification discourse. However, they prove to hold different interpretations of it. A rationalist might argue that these two interpretations of the diversification discourse reflect the same interest of both actors to secure their self-security, the EU through the security of supply, and Russia by maintaining Gazprom's quasi-monopolist role in supplying the EU. A conventional constructivist can go beyond the rationalist stance by underlining that their understanding of diversification as a way to achieve energy security simply differs: for the EU, security of supply means diversification of gas sources for the EU (fewer Russian sources), for Russia it means diversification of gas transportation routes (but same source).

However, while these explanations can be accurate, such a dissimilar understanding seems assumed and obvious given the material positions of the two actors. The EU's security of supply would be enhanced with less Russian gas whereas Russia as main exporter intends to keep its privileged role.

⁶⁴⁹ The South Stream Transport Consortium's Website, *Gas Pipeline Route*, <http://www.south-stream.info/en/pipeline/route/> Accessed 20/01/2013

See also K., Hubert, *Gunther Oettinger: Europe Has to Take the Russians Seriously*, Natural Gas Europe, 20 December, 2012. Available from: <http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/gunther-oettinger-europe-has-to-take-the-russians-seriously> Accessed 20/02/2013

⁶⁵⁰ J.D.A., Tarasov, *The Making of Empires : Russia's Gas Exporting Pipelines v Nabucco*, *Journal of World Energy Law and Business*, Vol. 4, Issue 1, 2011, p. 82

⁶⁵¹ Baran, *Security Aspects of the South Stream Project*, p.8

⁶⁵² Or four, if Turkish zone is counted.

⁶⁵³ Tarasov, *The Making of Empires : Russia's Gas Exporting Pipelines v Nabucco*, pp. 86-87

Conversely, a discursive approach would oppose the rationalist assumption that interests are extra-discursive by stressing the importance of the inter-subjective encounter with the 'Other' as well as the linguistic component. These are elements overlooked by rationalist accounts.⁶⁵⁴

In general, the rationalist literature either seeks to explore whether or not South Stream and Nabucco are competitors⁶⁵⁵ or it assumes the competition between the two projects and seeks to assess the feasibility of the two projects by outlining limitations and advantages of one over the other.⁶⁵⁶ Moving away from rationalist accounts, the existing discourse-based literature problematizes the actor's view and tends to focus on detecting inner contradictions in the context of the pipeline politics. Khasson⁶⁵⁷ argues that the EU's diversification discourse – which is part of the broader securitisation strategy of the EU – dominates over and sits in opposition with the competing EU's discourse of 'integrating Russia'. The latter, thus, becomes a marginal discourse. Yet, here the debates over the diversification discourse are one-sided; they are investigated only within the EU. Tichy and Kratochvil⁶⁵⁸ combine the two perspectives by focusing on the discursive practices (e.g. speeches) of both Russian and EU policymakers. In doing so, they outline three main discourses – integration, liberalization, and diversification – and examine how actors construct these discourses. These accounts certainly add a new perspective to the reading of the diversification discourse and to the politics around the Nabucco and South Stream pipelines.

However, the proposed approach represents a progression from existing accounts analysing exclusively energy discourses. These accounts neglect the importance of the Russian 'Other' and its constitutive role. As such, to address this gap the politics of the Nabucco and South Stream pipeline projects is here conceptualized as a Self / Other discursive encounter. Various mutual representations – emerging from previous layers – such as the Western-Russian historical encounter and their encounter as energy actors

⁶⁵⁴ See for example Baran, *Security Aspects of the South Stream Project*

⁶⁵⁵ See for example S., Roginsky, South Stream and Nabucco: Are They Competitors?, *Pipeline & Gas Journal*, Vol. 235, Issue 4, pp. 62-65, April 2008

⁶⁵⁶ See for example, D., Finon, The EU Foreign Gas Policy of Transit Corridors: Autopsy of the Stillborn Nabucco Project, *OPEC Energy Review*, Vol. 35, No.,1, March 2011, pp. 47-69

See also Tarasov, *The Making of Empires : Russia's Gas Exporting Pipelines v Nabucco*

See D., Freifeld, The Great pipeline Opera, *Foreign Policy*, No. 174, Sept.-Oct. 2009, pp. 120-127

See also A., Tsiaras, Pipeline Wars, *Yale Economic Review*, Vol. 6, Issue 2, 2010, pp.21-25

See also M., Rowley, The Nabucco Pipeline Project -- Gas Bridge To Europe?, *Pipeline & Gas Journal*, Vol. 236, No. 9, Sept. 2009, p. 72-73

⁶⁵⁷ Khasson, *Discourses and Interests in EU-Russia Energy Relations*

⁶⁵⁸ Kratochvil and Tichy, *EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations*.

– construct a representational continuum – a space that goes from radical confrontation to cooperation (‘degree of Otherness’) – that enables us to explain the confrontational or the cooperative positions of actors in the politics around the Nabucco and South Stream projects. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that the layered ‘degree of Otherness’ – rather than the mere material factors or the simple interplay of energy discourse – can also explain the different positions and understandings of actors. For example, the EU’s representation of Russia as a ‘distrustful supplier’ and Russian egalitarian discourse that challenges the EU’s leadership in Europe, is indicative of a broad ‘degree of Otherness’ that can also contribute to explaining the different and conflicting actors’ visions on diversification. The ‘degree of Otherness’ is, however, subject to variation.

Despite the different understanding of diversification, both parties have extensively played the pro-European discourse of security of supply for Europe, demonstrating how a narrow ‘degree of Otherness’ is at play. Reasoning on the level of layer one, it can be said that both Western Europe (EU) and Russia interpret energy security for Europe as a mission. In doing so, both demonstrate a belonging to the European continent by arguing in favour of the co-existence of the two pipelines through a non-exclusive discourse.

However, as closer analysis will illustrate, this sense of mission and belonging ultimately involves an exclusionary practice. Therefore, the actors move from a situation of positive representations and commonness to a scenario of negative ‘Otherness’.

This case study also paves the ground to understand the concept of ‘primacy of politics’ claimed by Laclau and Mouffe. Identities of actors are not only constructed through their different and clashing interests or cultures, but they also derive from the political contestation of discourses. Subjects position and identify themselves within a discursive structure (e.g. cooperation). However, since these structure are unstable, ‘any concrete individual’ can ‘dislocate’, that is, adhere to another discursive structure (e.g. antagonism). This is due to the unstable nature of the social and political world. It is in the process of identification and dislocation that new political subjectivities are formed or reshaped. As such, the process of dislocation illustrates that the subject is not determined by an a priori structure⁶⁵⁹ and confirms the relational essence of identity as

⁶⁵⁹ Dowding, *Encyclopedia of Power*, p. 370

well as the social character of objectivity.

The next section will focus on the non-exclusive narrative and will draw out implications for the political construction of ‘Europe’, and for the broader relations between Western Europe and Russia.

Before starting the analysis, it is important to clarify who narrates in this storyline. Given that Gazprom – which is South Stream’s main shareholder – is owned in majority by the Russian government, this chapter considers the statements or symbolic acts made by representatives of Gazprom or Russian government as complementary to the Russian mainstream discourse in the debate.

For its part, official documents of the EC as well as speeches and symbolic actions made by its representatives and officials of institutions representing the EU per se – as opposed to those promoting the interest of individual MS – provide ground for mapping the discursive toolbox of the EU.

3 The Non-Exclusive Narrative

Having described the pipeline projects and the politics behind them, the following sections aim to map the discursive context played out by the EU – mainly through the language of the EC – and Russian top officials. As the main discourses are identified, it will be demonstrated how these are linked to the narratives detected in layers one and two.

A first analysis of the discourses played out in this case study demonstrates that EC and Russian top officials have embarked on a conciliatory discourse through statements denying any sort of rivalry between South Stream and Nabucco. As the Energy Minister of Russia, Sergei Shmatko, commented on the proposal to merge the two projects, ‘Nabucco and South Stream are far from being competitors’.⁶⁶⁰ The then Russian President, Dmitry Medvedev as well as Alexander Medvedev⁶⁶¹, Deputy

⁶⁶⁰ A., Shiryayevskaya, *Russia Rejects Eni Call to Merge Europe Gas Pipelines*, Bloomberg, 15 March 2010. Available from: <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=ae4.eb41Pqjk>
Accessed 11/11/2013

⁶⁶¹ Alexander Medvedev wrote in Today's Zaman: ‘*The fact that South Stream is primarily an investment*

Chairman of Gazprom Management, reiterated this vision by emphasizing the non-exclusive nature of the two projects.⁶⁶² Echoing Medvedev, Viktor Zubkov, First Deputy Prime Minister of Russia also claimed that the South Stream, Nord Stream and Nabucco gas pipelines could co-exist.⁶⁶³

Putin has also proved to hold a similar stance and has subscribed to the discourse of route diversification: 'In terms of alternative routes of delivery, we are in favour of them. We are not taking part and will not take part in the Nabucco project, but we will not impede it...In general, we believe that the more diversification, the better'.⁶⁶⁴

For its part, the EC has confirmed such a non-adversary view denying any competitive intention vis a vis the Russian South Stream: 'What concerns Nabucco, it is our desire to diversify. It has nothing to do with South Stream or not South Stream'.⁶⁶⁵ The Energy Commissioner, Günther Oettinger has reiterated – although with less firmness – the commitment to open the Southern Corridor Initiative through Nabucco and the possible co-existence with South Stream.⁶⁶⁶

in energy security, not in boosting the market share of Russian gas, also means that it does not compete with other pipeline projects that intend to import fresh supply volumes from other possible gas sources. South Stream does not oppose these projects'. See A., Medvedev, The EU Supports All New Gas Pipelines, Just How Much? Today's Zaman, 25 March 2011. Available from:

<http://www.todayszaman.com/news-239124-opinion-the-eu-supports-all-new-gas-pipelines-just-how-much.html> Accessed 20/07/2013

⁶⁶² During his visit in Hungary Medvedev said: 'South Stream will have no negative impact on Nabucco, just as Nabucco will have no negative effect on South Stream'. See O., Shchedrov, *UPDATE 2-Russia Wins Hungary for South Stream Gas Project*, Reuters, 25 February 2008. Available from: <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2008/02/25/russia-hungary-pipeline-idUKL2530997220080225> Accessed 20/09/2013

⁶⁶³ Zubkov said that: 'Russia stands for diversification of gas flows to Europe and doesn't regard Nabucco as a competitor to the South Stream and the Nord Stream...The South Stream, Nord Stream and Nabucco gas pipelines should be built'. See The South Stream Transport Consortium's Website, *Opinions*, 2009. Available from: <http://www.south-stream.info/en/press/opinions/archive/2009/> Accessed 15/01/2013

⁶⁶⁴ Government of the Russian Federation, Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin Met With Foreign Media, 8 January 2009. Available from: <http://archive.premier.gov.ru/eng/events/news/2956/print/> Accessed 24/11/13

Another statement in this sense occurred during a joint press conference between Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and Putin following the signature of a construction agreement, Reuters quoted the Russian president as saying: 'South Stream will not hinder Nabucco. Nabucco and South Stream pipelines are not mutually exclusive. See *Putin says South Stream will not hinder Nabucco*, Reuters, 6 August 2009. Available from: <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2009/08/06/turkey-russia-nabucco-idUKIST00399120090806> Accessed 10/09/2013

⁶⁶⁵ A., Piegbals, *Gas Warms EU-Russia Ties*, Green Opinion, Issue 776, 7 April 2008. Available from: <http://greenopinion.ru/energydialogue/?q=node/1737> Accessed 20/09/2013

⁶⁶⁶ In answering a parliamentary question, Oettinger said that: 'South Stream and the Nabucco projects (as well as other projects in the Southern Gas Corridor) are not mutually exclusive'. See Oettinger, G., *Parliamentary Questions E-005372/2012*. Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission, 5 July 2012. Available from: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-005372&language=EN> Accessed 20/10/2013

In addition, under Oettinger, the Commission discourse also gave a boost to the image of Russia as an untroubled⁶⁶⁷ and non-threatening⁶⁶⁸ energy partner by even offering cooperation: 'We [European Commission] will support South Stream in its administrative processes in the EU, and we will not impose any unreasonable or unjustified level of administrative or regulatory requirements'.⁶⁶⁹

Overall, the statements reported above reveal the existence of a non-threatening discourse with the two actors excluding the existence of any rival logic. The scenario reported here is that of two actors following their energy interests in a neoliberal fashion (MI in layer two)⁶⁷⁰ and through positive representations of the historical Other (layer one). This initial discursive overview suggests a liberal reading of EU–Russian relations which assumes the natural integration of Russia with Europe and the consequent status of Russia's 'belonging' to Europe.

4 The Discursive Practice of Integration and Modernization Discourses

The plan to channel gas from the Caspian region to the EU can only complement and diminish – but not entirely substitute – existing Russian gas imports to the EU.⁶⁷¹

⁶⁶⁷ Discussing the issue of security of gas supply in the EU during his speech at a Eurogas Conference in April 2012, Oettinger noted: 'Let me take this occasion to clearly state that I do not think that the EU as such is too much dependent on Russian gas. We also do not have to worry about increasing Russian gas volumes coming to the EU. However, in order to ensure a functioning, competitive and sustainable internal gas market, all parts of the EU should have access to different gas sources'. See Oettinger, G., Energy Dialogue: Russia European Union. Gas Aspects. Eurogas Conference Brussels, 27 April 2012, p. 3. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/oettinger/headlines/speeches/2012/04/doc/20120427.pdf Accessed 4/4/2013

⁶⁶⁸ In March 2010, the Russian online newspaper Ria-Novosti reports a statement by the Oettinger who confirmed the non-antagonistic discourse by saying that: 'The European Commission does not view Russia-backed South Stream and Western Nabucco gas pipeline projects as rival'. See Ria Novosti, *EU Rejects View of South Stream, Nabucco Gas Pipeline as Rival*, 4 March 2010. Available from: <http://en.ria.ru/business/20100304/158093544.html> Accessed 5/5/2013

⁶⁶⁹ G., Oettinger, Speech of Commissioner Oettinger at the South Stream Event, Brussels, 25 May 2011. Available from: http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/russia/documents/news/20110525_en.pdf Accessed 10/10/2013

Likewise, the BBC reported Commissioner Oettinger as explicitly saying that: 'we [European Commission] don't want to block South Stream'. UPI- United Press International, EU Unfazed by Russian Gas Ambitions', UPI, 11 February 2011. Available from: http://www.upi.com/Business_News/Energy-Resources/2011/02/11/EU-unfazed-by-Russian-gas-ambitions/UPI-87391297427367/ Accessed 20/09/2013

⁶⁷⁰ Both actors attempt to pass on the message that the main aim of their respective projects is to promote energy security in the European continent in a non-exclusive way.

⁶⁷¹ P., Aalto, European Perspectives for Managing Dependence, in J., Perovic, R.W., Orttung, and A.

Therefore, the EU still has a strong interest in having cooperative rather than hostile relations with Russia which could consider a diversification of its export markets away from the EU.⁶⁷² In this light, on the EU side, two further discourses can be identified in the debate.

The first one is the 'integration discourse'. Such a discourse revolves around the need to integrate the EU's and Russian energy markets⁶⁷³ and reveals a sense of tolerance in the implementation of South Stream along with the Nabucco projects: 'While South Stream is neither a Southern Corridor pipeline, nor a project of European interest as defined in the Trans European Energy Networks guidelines, the Commission welcomes all investments in the European gas grid and in pipelines bringing gas to the EU'⁶⁷⁴. An example of the integration language is provided by French liberal MEP⁶⁷⁵, Laperrouze, who said: 'I advocate an approach geared to conciliation in dialogue with Russia, which supplies 42% of the EU's gas', adding that, 'Nabucco will have more chance if the EU worked with Moscow'.⁶⁷⁶

Wenger, eds., *Russian Energy Power and Foreign Relations: Implications for Conflict and Cooperation*. London: Routledge, 2009, p.164, quoted by Pick, *EU-Russia Energy Relations: A critical analysis*, p.345

⁶⁷² Monaghan, *Russia-EU Relations: An Emerging Energy Security Dilemma*, quoted by Pick, *EU-Russia Energy Relations: A critical analysis*, p. 345

⁶⁷³ Speaking at the above-mentioned presentation of the South Stream project in Brussels, Commissioner Oettinger stated: 'Now is the time to join these (EU and Russia) two internal markets, without barriers at the border among which I would also count export monopolies. See Oettinger, *Speech of Commissioner Oettinger at the South Stream Event*

⁶⁷⁴ G., Oettinger, Parliamentary Questions E-5280/2010. Answer given by Mr. Oettinger on behalf of the Commission, 23 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2010-5280&language=EN> Accessed 20/09/2013.

Other examples are Oettinger's reply to another Parliamentary question on 'South Stream and EU antitrust and environmental obligations', while speaking the sovereignty rhetoric, the Commissioner also employs the cooperation language by specifying that: 'The Commission is ready to assist the Member States concerned as well as the companies promoting South Stream on their territory to ensure that this project, if built, complies with European law, in particular EU Internal Energy Market and environmental rules'. See G. Oettinger, Parliamentary Questions E-010537/2012, Answer given by Mr. Oettinger on behalf of the Commission, 22 January 2013. Available from: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-010537&language=EN> Accessed 20/09/2013.

In Oettinger's reply to the question on 'Nabucco, South Stream, and synergies in the Southern Corridor' submitted by Niki Tzavela, the Commissioner notes that: 'Nabucco, and the Southern Corridor more generally, are about promoting European energy security of supply and diversification. The Commission has consistently said that Russian, American or indeed any qualified interests are invited to take part in the common enterprise that is the Southern Corridor, provided the strategic objectives pursued are fully met'. See G. Oettinger, Parliamentary Questions E-001799/2011. Answer given by Mr. Oettinger on behalf of the Commission, 23 March 2011. Available from:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-001799&language=EN> Accessed 20/09/2013

⁶⁷⁵ Member of the European Parliament.

⁶⁷⁶ A., Laperrouze, MEP, Motion for a European Parliament Resolution on the Second Strategic Energy Review, European Parliament, 26 January 2009. Available from: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?language=EN&reference=A6-0013/2009> Accessed

Evidence of cooperative and messianic discourses can be found also on the Russian side. As said, Russia has an interest in reinforcing the role of its energy giant Gazprom as the EU's main supplier. One of the discursive options employed to increase the positive image of Gazprom's project is to depict it as being separate from material interest. Rather the tendency is to attach a more profound and ideal significance to it. From this perspective, the Russian Federation has proved to attach major importance to the realization of a 'pan-European' project such as South Stream. In this attempt to describe South Stream as a pan-European project, Russian Ambassador Aleksandr Chepurin underlined how such a pipeline represents a bridge between the eastern and western part of Europe. During a conference in Belgrade he said that: 'Russia attaches major importance to the South Stream pipeline, having in mind its positive European commitments to European unification'.⁶⁷⁷ Moreover, he stressed that this would be a new step in the prosperous Europe, which will no longer be limited by 'Berlin Walls'.⁶⁷⁸

As demonstrated in layer one (chapter 3), the integration discourse reflects a recurring narrative element employed by Western Europe when cooperation with Russia was seen as possible and, thus, a positive image of Russia was held (e.g. post-Napoleonic epoch, 19th century discourse of Western European conservatives). Likewise, moving to the level of layer-two analysis, the discursive evidence reported demonstrates how elements of the neoliberal energy paradigm (MI) are at work. In fact, integration and cooperation are presented as leading principles to promote energy security through the Nabucco and South Stream projects.

On the EU side, the focus on co-existence and integration fosters the idea that modernization of the Russian partner is needed to enhance the outcome of the cooperation. As seen in layer one, one of the Western interpretations of Russia was that of a country with great potential (e.g. 'land of the future') but in a somehow constant transition towards modernization. Such a discourse emerges through statements by Commissioner Oettinger:

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⁶⁷⁷ B92, Russia Attaches 'Great Importance' to South Stream, 12 July 2013. Available from: http://www.b92.net/eng/news/business.php?yyyy=2013&mm=07&dd=12&nav_id=86924 Accessed 10/11/2013

⁶⁷⁸ B92, Ibidem

‘The modernisation of its (Russia) energy sector is also essential for the Russian Federation. For the modernisation of Russian coal and gas power plants the Russian government has earmarked the amount of 11.1 trillion roubles (around 227 billion Euros) to improve their efficiency. In addition to power plants, also pipelines and transmission lines have to be modernised. This is an opportunity for further cooperation between EU and Russian industry’.⁶⁷⁹

Yet, as it emerges from this, along with the ‘land of the future’ representation, the Eurocentric inclination of Western Europe to position itself as a ‘teacher’ as opposed to a ‘learner’ able to judge the development status of Russia, is visible. In other words, the EU constructs its temporal identity as a ‘developed’ actor and that of Russian as a ‘developing’ Other. As such, while benevolently open to cooperation, the EU indicates to Russia how it should go about modernization.

All in all, this first analysis leads to the conclusion that in the pipeline politics regarding the Nabucco and South Stream projects, the EU and Russia do not represent each other as ‘opponents’ or in confrontational terms. From an initial interpretation, the interaction seems to be between two partners with different projects – Nabucco and South Stream – but a common objective: shipping gas to Western Europe. If the analysis is transposed to layer one level, both the EU and Russia are mutually represented as European powers belonging to the same European continent and serving the goal of providing Europe with energy security. In addition, the examples provided indicate that both actors employ a pro-Europe narrative engendering positive and non-threatening images of their counterpart. This can be seen as evoking the *raison d’être* of the Concert of Europe of the XIX century whose members were committed to preserve security in the European continent. Similarly, the theme of cooperation and integration with Europe reflects the ultimate aim of the Russian post-communist orientation. From this perspective, the fact that Nabucco and South Stream are seen as different projects serving the same European interest evokes the Gorbachevian thinking informing the Common European Home Initiative. In fact, the Gorbachevian conception included the idea of mutual respect between the Western and Soviet systems that – despite basic differences – belong to the same continent and history. More specifically, Gorbachev’s perspective even conceived

⁶⁷⁹ Oettinger, *Energy Dialogue: Russia European Union. Gas Aspects*

competition between two systems as ‘salutary’ as long as it improves the ‘material and spiritual condition of life for people’.⁶⁸⁰ Also, to evoke a separate historical parallel, the description of the two pipelines as not mutually exclusive projects recalls the Cold War doctrine of peaceful-co-existence, which promoted neutral relationship between the Soviet and Western models with the aim to reduce hostility and rule out the possibility of a conflict.

Overall, an initial investigation of the discourse field played out in the pipeline politics on the construction of Nabucco and South Stream reveals that elements of a cooperative narrative are superficially at work, therefore, the ‘degree of Otherness’ appears narrow from both sides. These actors’ positions have meaningful implications for the construction of actors’ spatial identity as European. Claims of co-existence and cooperation from both sides demonstrate a common understanding of Europe as a united continent with no clear boundaries (‘white zone’). Similarly, the shared benevolent positions also construct the ethical identities of actors through the understanding of their pipeline projects as serving the ethical ‘mission’ of ensuring energy security for the European continent.

However, the above claims can be proved to be at odds with other conflicting discourses and symbolic acts since different types of discourse reflecting different degree of otherness exist. Thus, the initial discursive landscape can be contradicted showing also how confrontational discourses are informing the pipeline debate .

5 The Discursive Practice of Comparison and Discredit of Other’s Project

It has been outlined how official discourses from both sides tend to emphasize the non-exclusive nature of the two projects. Yet, it can be demonstrated how the initial predominance of the non-antagonist discourse is undermined by the presence of conflictual dispositions between the two players. Such a conflict disposition does not refer to any objective phenomenon outside communication, but it can be grasped

⁶⁸⁰ M. Gorbachev, ‘Europe as a Common Home’. Address given by Mikhail Gorbachev to the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 6 July 1989. Available from: http://polsci.colorado.edu/sites/default/files/1A_Gorbachev.pdf Accessed 27/07/2014

through discursive practices played out by both parties. A first sign proving the existence of logic of confrontation materializes in the official discourse and speeches that phrase the debate on Nabucco and South Stream in comparative terms. For example, Commissioner Oettinger admitted that the Russian South Stream gas pipeline is a potential competitor to the EU-backed Nabucco project in the long term.⁶⁸¹

Oettinger, moreover, clearly speaks the language of comparison when he stated that 'Nabucco is slated to transport gas from previously undeveloped fields in the Caspian region to Europe. South Stream on the other hand will transport Russian gas via a different route to European consumers.'⁶⁸²

The theme of comparison can also be grasped in the statements released by Russian representatives. For example, Minister Shmatko considers South Stream 'to have every chance of being realized earlier than Nabucco...Nabucco has a range of issues which still need to be resolved'.⁶⁸³ Furthermore, the sense of urgency that Putin confers to the finalization of South Stream can be read in confrontational terms: 'We will do everything as quickly for South Stream...South Stream's major rival Nabucco has little chance of success'.⁶⁸⁴

Overall, although the initial discursive practices played out by both parties insisted on

⁶⁸¹ During a conference marking the 10th anniversary of the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue in Brussels, Oettinger said that '*South Stream is likely to compete with Nabucco in the long term*'. Quoted in Ria Novosti, South Stream May Compete with Nabucco 'In Long Term'- EU Commissioner', November 2010. Available from: <http://en.rian.ru/world/20101122/161442651.html> Accessed 10/10/2013

⁶⁸² Pipeline, *EU Energy Chief: Nabucco, South Stream Pipeline Don't Compete*, 29 March 2011. Available from: <http://www.pipelineme.com/news/international-news/2011/04/nabucco-and-south-stream-are-not-rivals-eu/> Accessed 22/01/2013

⁶⁸³ Today's Zaman, *South Stream-Nabucco Gas Pipeline Race Speeds Up*, 19 May 2009. Available from: http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?sessionId=4D7630105C7DCAF0286E12A076B834FB?pageNo=509&category=105&dt=0&newsId=175687&columnistId=0 Accessed 10/11/2013.

Other similar statements epitomizing a sense of confrontation occurred in March 2010 when Bloomberg reports Russian Energy Minister Sergei Shmatko as saying: '*The need to diversify energy flows to Europe is understandable; we think that Nabucco and South Stream are far from being competitors*'. However, he added that 'South Stream is "*more competitive*" than Nabucco'. Shiryaevskaya, *Russia Rejects Eni Call to Merge Europe Gas Pipelines*

⁶⁸⁴ Ria Novosti, *South Stream to be Built as Quickly as Nord Stream*, 6 September 2010. Available from: <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100906/160490570.html> Accessed 20/10/2013.

Two similar opinions can be read on the South Stream website. In the first, Minister Shmatko said that '*It is necessary to answer a number of questions in order to build Nabucco and, primarily, what will be the gas price for European consumers, where will the route run and where will the resources come from? The South Stream has already resolved these issues, and the price of gas delivered through the South Stream will be lower if compared to Nabucco*'. See The South Stream Transport Consortium's Website, (2009), *op. cit.*

In the second opinion Dmitry Peskov, Press Secretary of Russian Prime Minister said that: '*Russia is not against the Nabucco project, although we aren't participating in it as we consider it less practicable compared to the South Stream*'. See The South Stream Transport Consortium's Website, *Five Questions and Answers*. Both opinions are available from: <http://www.south-stream.info/en/press/opinions/archive/2009/> Accessed 12/12/2013

the ‘non-rival’ and ‘non-contradictory’ elements, these examples are a signal that both have also projected a logic of confrontation regarding the other’s project. Such a logic recalls the confrontational nature of the relations between the West bloc and the USSR during the Cold War when the two blocs competed to show the world the superiority of Self’s political model over that of the Other.

One might argue that representing the two projects in comparative terms does not necessarily confirm the presence of an antagonist discourse. However, it can be illustrated how the discourses of both sides are not limited to a mere comparison but a conflictual disposition which occurs through the discursive practice of mutual denigration of the Other’s project. In political discourse, when actors put forward logical and emotional arguments in support of their projects, they implicitly depict themselves as credible and reliable actors (e.g. ‘true’) emphasizing competence, benevolence, and dominance. Similarly, such a discursive strategy also leads to the discrediting of the opponent’s project.⁶⁸⁵ In other words, by supporting its own belief each actor tries to pass on the message that the course proposed by Self is more ‘European’ and more developed than the one proposed by Other.

As noted, the existence of an antagonistic logic has often recurred in the history of the West-Russian relationship. For example, as analyzed in layer one, the discourse of discrediting the Other’s project has been largely employed in Cold War contestation during which the Western bloc and the USSR tended to portray the political experiment of the counterpart in negative terms and as doomed to failure. Against this background, a more in-depth examination of the arguments put forward by EU and Russian top officials demonstrates how such a discursive practice is visible also in the politics behind the South Stream and Nabucco. For example, Commissioner Oettinger, has shed doubt on the feasibility and necessity of the Russian-backed project:

‘Today, I have come to listen and to learn. For me, South Stream so far seemed more of a concept than a concrete project. What we know is that the gas in South Stream will leave Russia, cross the Black Sea and arrive in Europe. Beyond that,

⁶⁸⁵ F. D’Enrico, I. Poggi, Discrediting the Opponent! Effects of Multilodal Discrediting Moves in Public Debates, *Cognitive Computation*, Vol.4, No.2, June 2012, Available from : <http://europa.uniroma3.it/dse/files/945ec8a9-0a63-46fe-ba07-1c058cd831d7.pdf#lSec4> Accessed 20/12/2012

there are a number of questions. Where will the gas actually come from? Where will it arrive? How will it arrive, by ship or by pipeline? Will it divert gas from Ukraine? Once it gets to Europe, what will happen? Most importantly, who can ship gas in the project? Is it only Gazprom, or also other players?’⁶⁸⁶

In the same vein, Russian representatives made statements fuelling scepticism over the EU-backed Nabucco. Speaking at the 7th meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club in Sochi, Putin stated:

‘Nabucco's biggest problem is lack of guaranteed gas supply. The pipeline does not have guaranteed gas sources, and I don't know if it can find any. Russia will not provide anything [for the pipeline], and Iran has not yet developed the related deposits. The other possible supplier is Azerbaijan, but they are only producing small amounts of natural gas and, besides, they have signed a gas supply contract with Russia. There is Turkmenistan, but it is unclear how much gas it can supply because a gas pipeline has been built from Turkmenistan to China with a capacity of 30 billion cu m. It is not clear if Turkmenistan will be able to supply gas for Nabucco’.⁶⁸⁷

Analogously, Putin's definition of Nabucco as a ‘senseless’ project falls under the discursive strategy of portraying the EU-backed project in negative terms.⁶⁸⁸ Also Viktor Zubkov, Putin's First Deputy Prime Minister during the Presidency of Dmitri

⁶⁸⁶ Oettinger, *Speech of Commissioner Oettinger at the South Stream Event*

In a similar manner, following Gazprom CEO Miller announcement that the final investment decision for the South Stream project had been reached, EU officials reacted to such a declaration pointing out how instead a number of issues remain still unresolved. This can be read as a rejection for Russian entry in the Concert of Europe. R., Synovitz, and R., Jozwiak, *Gazprom Says South Stream Construction To Start, While EU Begs to Differ*, Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty, 8 December 2012. Available from: <http://www.rferl.org/content/russia-south-stream-construction/24791378.html> Accessed 20/10/2013

⁶⁸⁷ Government of Russian Federation, Transcript of the Prime Minister Vladimir Putin Meets with Participants of the 7th meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club in Sochi, 6 September 2010. Available from <http://archive.government.ru/eng/docs/12039/print/> Accessed 23/11/2013

⁶⁸⁸ During the press conference with Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria, Werner Fayman, questioned on the contradiction deriving from Austrian involvement in both the Nabucco and South Stream project, the President Putin asserted: ‘*I would like to draw attention to something that specialists are well aware of: before building something you first need to sign a supply contract. Building a pipeline without any contracts is senseless and highly risky. No one in this business would do that. Please, name at least one contract that has been signed under the Nabucco project. We can sign such contracts for the South Stream but I do not see anybody who would be keen to do the same under Nabucco*’. See Government of the Russian Federation, Following Negotiations, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria Werner Fayman Give News Conference, 2010. Available from: <http://archive.government.ru/eng/docs/10337/print/> Accessed 28/01/2013

Medvedev questioned the reliability of Nabucco regarding the sufficient gas to fill Nabucco.⁶⁸⁹

The various quotes reported uncover that within the debate around the Nabucco and South Stream pipeline, promoters have repeatedly tried to shed doubt on the opposed pipeline project. The mutual discrediting of Self and Other reveals that a remarkable (geo)political discourse – rather than an economic one - is played out in the context of EU-Russia (energy) relations (layer 2).

As said, by discrediting the Other, the Self attempted to trace a divide between ‘them’ and ‘us’. Such an us / them divide is transformed into ‘otherness’ and portrayed as a negation of identity and thus gives ground for potential discrimination and asymmetry in power relationships, which is central to the construction of ‘otherness’.

This sense of asymmetry leads Self to impose the truth of its distinctive identity and to undervalue the distinctiveness of Other’s identity, which, in turn, acquires the image of a ‘threat’. It emerges that ‘Otherness’ and Self-identity are two indivisible faces of the same coin. The Other only exists in relation to the Self, and vice versa. Therefore, the Other holds constitutive power. Through this concept it is possible to emphasise the validity of intersubjective interaction in identity formation. This represents another key notion overlooked by the rationalist account, which derives actors’ identity and interest exclusively from an anonymous structure.

The discursive strategy of discrediting the other’s project around South Stream-Nabucco politics ultimately translates into an imperial dispute over ‘Europe’ understood as a political project. In particular, what is at stake is the ownership of energy security in the European continent. As such, each actor seeks to push the Other to the edges of European political space through discrediting and exclusion.⁶⁹⁰

⁶⁸⁹ Ria Novosti, *Nabucco Not Serious Rival to Russian Gas Pipe Project-Zubkov*, 15 July 2009. Available from: <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090715/155533724.html> Accessed 20/10/2012.

In an interview to Ria-Novosti in 2010, Igor Sechin, the then Russian Deputy Prime Minister told reporters: *‘Given the estimates of the Turkmen side, as well as European and international experts, the current market situation on the gas track allows us to say and I say so without sarcasm that there are no prospects for Nabucco... There are no real prospects of increasing volumes, which makes the Nabucco project irrelevant. This can be forgotten until a certain moment of economic growth...The Russian-backed Northern Stream pipeline would be launched by that time and the Southern Stream pipeline would also be developed. (South Stream) will take precedence over the terms, sources of supply.’* The conclusion is: *“Nabucco has no future”*.

See Ria Novosti, *Nabucco Gas Project Has No Future-Russian Deputy PM*, 22 October 2010. Available from: <http://en.rian.ru/business/20101022/161053001.html> Accessed 20/10/2012

⁶⁹⁰ P., Joenniemi, *Regionalisation as Europe-Making: The Case of Europe’s North*, *Acta Slavica Iaponica*, No. 15, 2008, p.36

The discursive practice of discrediting Other's project is neglected by existing discourse-based accounts. They also overlook the spatial, temporal, and ethical construction of actors' identity related to 'discrediting'. Instead, it can be noted that, by discrediting the appropriateness of the Other's project, the Self aims to depict its project as more 'advanced', thus it constructs the temporal identity of its project as more 'developed' compared to the Other's. In addition, the widening of the 'degree of Otherness' between them, and the reappearance of an Othering process indicates the re-emergence of spatial borders between the Self and the Other in Europe. Similarly, the discursive strategy through which Self represents its project as 'true' as opposed to the Other's 'false' project, reveals a construction of actors as 'ethical'. The interplay of these three dimensions around the discursive strategy of 'discrediting the Other' determine actors' positions in conflictual terms. Yet, this is only one of the discursive strategies employed. Other discursive strategies – such as sovereignty and exceptionalism – that contribute to the actors' conflictual positions discrediting the Other's project deserve more attention.

6 The Discourse of Sovereignty in the Form of EU's Othering and Russian Exceptionalism

It has been illustrated how the discursive practice of mutual discrediting undermines the initial integration and benevolent discourse claimed by both parties and contributes to constructing actors' positions in confrontational terms. In particular, the themes of integration and co-existence have been further eroded by claims revealing the existence of a strong sovereignty discourse that acquires the shape of Russian uniqueness and EU Eurocentrism⁶⁹¹ through which both actors depict each other in hostile or illegitimate terms. The EU has consistently – with its exclusionary practice – acted to oppose any Russian move to acquire legitimacy and Europeaness for its South Stream project. For its part, Russia has disclosed a clear intention to receive a European labeling for its South Stream pipeline. For example, Russian-owned Gazprom has sought high-level political ties to ensure legitimacy and to provide an impression that these are actual

⁶⁹¹ Prozorov, *Understanding Conflict between Russia and the EU*, p.2

‘European projects’. The Russian quest for Europeaness can be, for example, seen in the hiring of Gerhard Schröder, former German Chancellor and Paavo Lipponen, Finnish Prime Minister, for the Nord Stream pipeline. Similarly, in attempting to increase the political support of South Stream in Europe, Putin offered former EC president and Italian Prime Minister, Romano Prodi, the position of head of the South Stream project.⁶⁹²

Another symbolic act that confirms such a strategy is the decision taken by the Russian Ministry of Energy and by Gazprom to officially present the South Stream project to the EC authorities in 2011 in Brussels. The objective behind such a choice was to obtain for South Stream the status of a trans-European gas transmission network – and thus a priority status – in order to be treated as projects of European importance and ensure the same treatment as Nabucco – which had already been granted such an exclusive status⁶⁹³ In May 2011 Russian Energy Minister, Shmatko, called on EC authorities to grant South Stream a TREN-E priority status.⁶⁹⁴ However, the EC negatively reacted to such a Russian quest for ‘Europeanness’ and equal treatment. By putting South Stream in comparative terms with Nabucco, the EC ultimately demonstrated that Gazprom’s project is not in line with the EU’s diversification discourse: ‘South Stream is a very important project, but in comparison to Nabucco, it does not offer a diversification of gas resources, it is just a new transit route’.⁶⁹⁵

A symbolic act that can be seen as confirming the reluctance of the EU to sponsor South Stream as a ‘European project’, Commissioner Oettinger reportedly declined the

⁶⁹² G., Dinmore, and I., Gorst, *Prodi Declines South Stream Post*, Financial Times, 28 April 2008.

Prodi declined this offer. According to his spokesman, Prodi took extra time off to think about various options after leaving Italian politics.

⁶⁹³ Novinite, *Russia to Campaign for Granting South Stream EU Priority Status*, 25 May 2011. Available from: http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=128573 Accessed 20/10/2013

It is important to note that Nabucco has a TPA exemption for 50% of its overall transportation capacity.

⁶⁹⁴ EurActiv with Reuters, *Russia Adds Final Pieces to South Stream Puzzle*, 25 May 2009. Available from: <http://www.euractiv.com/energy/russia-adds-final-pieces-south-s-news-222062> Accessed 20/10/2013.

The TREN-E priority status includes the exemption from the obligation to provide non-consortium members indiscriminate access to the pipeline’s capacity.

⁶⁹⁵ R., Kovacheva, *European Commission: South Stream is not a European Project*, euinside, 18 November 2010. Available from: <http://www.euinside.eu/en/news/ec-south-stream-is-not-a-european-project> Accessed 20/10/2013

The same article reports that, asked on the possibility to become part of the TEN-E, Oettinger’s spokesperson - Marlene Holtzner replied unequivocally: ‘*The European Commission is obliged to stick to the existing TEN-E Guidelines of 6 September 2006. South Stream is not included in the 2006 TEN-E decision and the Commission has no intention to change the current and existing TEN-E decision*’.

The European Management Institute reports that spokesperson Marlene Holzner, said : ‘*The European Commission denied the Russian allegation that the “South Stream” gas pipeline will get a special statute...*’. See Energy Management Institute, *South Stream and the European Network Access Rules*, 11 December 2012. Available from: <http://www.emi-bg.com/en/index.php?id=748> Accessed 20/10/2013

invitation to attend a ceremony near the Russian Black Sea town of Anapa to celebrate, in the presence of Putin, the official beginning of the construction of the offshore section of the South Stream pipeline.⁶⁹⁶ It is worth noting here that the Commission President Barroso and the then Commissioner for Energy, Andris Piebalgs, did represent the EC at the high level ceremony involving the five prime ministers of Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria, Austria and Hungary convened in Ankara to sign an agreement to build Nabucco.⁶⁹⁷

Overall, the evidence provided here illustrates how Russia has aimed to receive a European blessing for its project. The decision to officially present the project in the EU-capital and the request to receive priority status from the EC might not only be symbolically read as Russia's acknowledgement of the EU as embodiment of Europe but it also demonstrates Russia's quest for 'Europeanness'.

In this respect, it can be argued that elements of an 'othering' practice emerge from the EU rejection to grant South Stream the status of 'European project' and, thus, to sponsor a Russian project. Through such a rejection the EU seems to associate the recognition of South Stream with the risk of a potential 'threat' to the EU's stability. In doing so, the EU not only depicts itself as the privileged European actor entitled to judge on the 'Europeanness' of others' projects but it also draws clear spatial boundaries in 'Europe' that becomes a 'red zone'. Ultimately, as seen for the modernization discourse, such a rejection reflects the historical Eurocentric inclination of Western Europe to pose itself as the embodiment of the 'true' Europe that holds the mission to construct Europe (ethical identity), and, thus has the power to decide on the position of the Russian Other in Europe (spatial identity).

The EU's position as a leader in the European energy agenda is in fact reinforced through the discursive self-identification with 'Europe'. For example, the pre-selection

⁶⁹⁶ EurActiv, *Oettinger Declines Invitation to South Stream Opening*, 7 December 2012. Available from: <http://www.euractiv.com/energy/oettinger-declines-attend-south-news-516524> Accessed 20/10/2013

⁶⁹⁷ BBC News, *Europe Gas Pipeline Deal Agreed*, 13 July 2009. Available from: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/8147053.stm> Accessed 20/10/2013

Moreover, Special Envoy for Eurasian Energy, Richard and Ranking Member of the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Senator Richard Lugar represented the US. See Turkish Press, *Nabucco Summits Begins*, 13 July 2009. Available from: http://www.turkishpress.com/news.asp?id=346171#_URlo_ByXRWs Accessed 20/10/2013

by the Shah Deniz Consortium (Azerbaijan) in favour of Nabucco West⁶⁹⁸ as a possible pipeline project to ship gas towards Western Europe was deemed as ‘a success for Europe and for our security of supply’.⁶⁹⁹ The ‘success’ for the pre-selection of Nabucco West and the ‘security of Europe’ are discursively linked with emphasis put on the positive contribution to the energy security of the European continent. As such, through this syllogism in its official discourse the EU tends to pose itself as the legitimate and responsible actor in charge of the energy security of the European continent.

Further discursive evidence regarding the Europeanisation discourse appeared in the official language of the EC through the discourse of conditionality and the sovereignty narrative. In this respect, the need for third parties – and thus also for Russia – to adhere to Communitarian rules in the EU territory is evident also in relation to the South Stream project. Oettinger in fact signaled openness towards South Stream claiming that it could gain ‘European’ support only on condition that the project meets EU-like standards.⁷⁰⁰ Therefore, the EU rules correspond to the ‘true’ European rules. In Oettinger’s words, Putin should understand that the energy giant Gazprom has to play by ‘our (EU) rules’.⁷⁰¹ He also underlined that once on EU territory ‘South Stream will be subject to the Third Package...and it will be subject to the internal (EU) market rules’.⁷⁰²

The clash in the discursive practices between Russia’s quest for Europeaness and the EU’s rejection of it, indicates that actors construct their spatial identity along different discursive practices. The EU constructs its spatial identity by drawing deep boundaries in the European continent between EU-Europe and Russia-Europe. On the other side,

⁶⁹⁸ Nabucco West is a modification of the original Nabucco Pipeline project. Shah Deniz was expected to be the main supply for the Nabucco West.

⁶⁹⁹ Commission of European Communities, Commissioner Oettinger Welcomes Decision on ‘Nabucco West’ pipeline, Press Release IP/12/720, 28 June 2012. Available from: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-720_en.htm?locale=en%20accessed%20on%2012%20January%202013 Accessed 10/09/2013

⁷⁰⁰ Oettinger said that: ‘South Stream could be backed by the European Commission on condition that it meets the technical requirements for security’. Quoted by AFP, *EU Could Back South Stream Gas Project: Commissioner*, 2 March 2010. Available from: http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hxgfk_8nOAP3ZGD_e-KMTezTbW9g Accessed 12/09/2013

⁷⁰¹ The Baltics Times, *Brussels Key to Breaking Gazprom’s Monopolistic Practices*, 19 September 2012. Available from: <http://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/31873/> Accessed 12/09/2013

⁷⁰² RT Question More, *Brussels Takes the Focus to South Stream*, 26 May 2011, <http://rt.com/business/south-stream-brussels-gas/> Accessed 22/11/13

Russia plays out an understanding of Europe as a whole continent with no clear boundaries ('white zone').

In addition, the emphasis on the non-compliance of the South Stream project with the provision of the EU's Third Energy Package that obliges third parties to access the pipelines⁷⁰³ confirms the sovereignty element of the Commission discourse by specifying that foreign pipelines on the EU territory have to comply with EU competition law. This conditionality tone also suggests that the EU is committed to adopting a more conciliatory stance and is willing to 'recognize' the South Stream project on condition that it complies with the EU competition rule of breaking energy monopolies.

However, from official discursive practices, it emerges how EU's representatives tend to understand sovereignty unilaterally, thus, disregarding the principle of recognition of Other's sovereignty. From this perspective, the teacher / learner dichotomy still characterizes the EU's discursive practice vis a vis Russia. During his speech at Gazprom's presentation of its South Stream project, Commissioner Oettinger said:

'We have developed an internal market with third party access and healthy competition.... Just to illustrate an example: as Gazprom can ship gas round the EU, Novatek can do so (only) in Russia. I would like to see Novatek in Europe, and EU gas companies in Russia. And pluralism between us'.⁷⁰⁴

Novatek is Russia's largest independent natural gas producer after Gazprom. Here, Oettinger refers to the fact that Novatek is prevented from selling to Europe – and other foreign countries in general – because the state-owned Russian Gazprom holds exclusive export rights. As such Oettinger encourages Russia to break the Gazprom monopoly in adherence with the competition principles that informs EU internal energy policy. In short, by speaking the language of hierarchy, he urges Russia to follow the EU model and develop towards the EU's objective (e.g. diversification):

⁷⁰³ Oettinger's spokeswoman, Marlene Holtzner, concluded that: '*This (Intergovernmental Agreement) is in contradiction with the principle of "third party access" and we would like to see it stated very clearly that other companies can also use this (South Stream) pipeline*'.

See Kovacheva, *European Commission: South Stream is not a European Project*

⁷⁰⁴ Oettinger, *Speech of Commissioner Oettinger at the South Stream Event*

‘If South Stream...gives access to gas independents active in Russia, then South Stream would deliver on two essential criteria: namely diversification of routes and counterparties. That means a stronger contribution to European diversification efforts’.⁷⁰⁵

As a consequence, the EU tends to replicate its own image as ‘policy-maker’ of Europe as opposed to ‘policy-taker’ Russia. Once again, the EU implicitly employs the temporal scheme of ‘development’ to construct its temporal identity as a leader opposed to the Russian follower.

Overall, conflict issues – such as the Nabucco-South Stream pipelines – have implications for the identity construction process in which the recognition of political difference prevails over mere technical issues. The EU’s practice of Othering Russian South Stream not only is at odds with the EU’s non-rivalry and non-exclusionary position vis-a-vis Russian South Stream, but it impacts on the long-standing debates on Russia’s relationship to ‘European civilisation’. In fact, the EU’s inability to speak the language of equality in favour of the ‘subject-object’ relation in which Russia is depicted as the passive ‘norm-taker’ obstructs the integration of Russia with the Concert of Europe.⁷⁰⁶

The lack of recognition of Russia as a lawful political subject with its own pipeline project fuels a Russian discourse rooted in the renewed reaffirmation of Russian exceptionalism as encountered in layer one. In other words, the perception of Othering not only establishes an antagonist discursive framework – as Nabucco and South Stream are acknowledged as contenders – but it also leads the Russian Self to depict its own project as being more achievable and concrete, that is, ‘unique’. Here, by portraying South Stream as a more advanced project, Russia constructs its temporal identity as promoter of a ‘developed’ project compared to the ‘developing’ EU-backed Nabucco. The discursive strategy appears in Russian official discourse, which tends to confer a sense of necessity and distinctiveness to its own pipeline project. In this respect, a parallel with the exceptionalist and messianic narratives claimed by Russia in its historical relationship with the West can be noted. These kind of narratives are, for

⁷⁰⁵ A., Torello, *EU, Russia Hints on Gas Pipeline*, The Wall Street Journal, May 2011. Available from: <http://blogs.wsj.com/brussels/2011/05/27/eu-russia-hints-on-gas-pipeline/> Accessed 20/10/2013

⁷⁰⁶ See for example Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*

example, caught in Putin's praise of the exceptional gas endowment of Russia:

‘Do you have any idea how big Russian natural gas reserves are? There are 55 trillion cubic meters of gas reserves in Russia's north-east alone. This is in just one gas province. In fact, we have more than one province like that. These natural gas reserves are unparalleled anywhere else in the world. We can meet the growing demand of the Russian economy and that of our main customers... practically all of our customers in Europe for the next hundred years’.⁷⁰⁷

Similar to the Dostoevskian ‘Russian Idea’ – which combined elements of the Slavophilism, Christian-Orthodox particularism, and Third Romeism – a messianic sense of the destiny attributed to Russia as the country that will rescue the world is visible in the statement by Dmitry Peskov, Press Secretary of Russian Prime Minister:

‘We consider the South Stream as a very significant project not only to Gazprom or Russia, but to the European continent and even to the whole world. This is a realistic project with very realistic goals and, most importantly, very material sources of natural gas. We are talking about the material sources of Russia, which guarantee filling pipelines with gas’.⁷⁰⁸

Linked to the messianic and exceptional themes is the philanthropic view that the Russian South Stream project is planned to protect citizens against threats emanating from security of supply. At the launch of the construction work on the South Stream pipeline which occurred in Anapa in December 2012, Putin affirmed that: ‘South Stream will create the conditions for a reliable gas supply for the main consumers in southern Europe’.⁷⁰⁹ Declarations like this reveal a sense of responsibility taken by Russia to carry out its mission to supply Southern Europe and construct Russia as an ethical actor.

As said, the narrative that emphasizes the distinctiveness of the Russian project ultimately translates into a Russian discourse that reaffirms its greatness and

⁷⁰⁷ Government of the Russian Federation, *Following negotiations, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria Werner Fayman Give News Conference*

⁷⁰⁸ The South Stream Transport Consortium's Website, *Opinions*

⁷⁰⁹ Reuters, *UPDATE 1-European Energy Firms Back Gazprom at Pipeline Ceremony*, 7 December 2012. Available from: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/07/russia-southstream-idUSL5E8N763D20121207> Accessed 20/10/2013

uniqueness.⁷¹⁰ ‘The South Stream Offshore Gas Pipeline through the Black Sea will be unique. This large-diameter gas pipeline infrastructure will run the longest distance along the bed of the deepest sea: up to 2,250 metres’.⁷¹¹ Further evidence in this direction is provided by Konstantin Simonov, the General Director of the National Energy Security Fund who said: ‘If you are speaking about Europe in reality there is no serious alternative to Russia...and all other alternatives are more problematic like Turkmenistan, like Iran, like Egypt, like Libya’.⁷¹²

By referring to the theme of exceptionalism, Russia has problematised the EU’s exclusionary practice and the hierarchical character of the proposed inclusion. As such, Russian discourse revolving around the Nabucco-South Stream has dislocated from the initial endorsement of co-existence and to overcoming the integrationist logic in the reaffirmation of sovereignty that is unveiled in the claims of distinctiveness and ‘particularism’. In short, Russian exceptionalism is manifested in the uniqueness of the Russian project and in Russian loyalty and dedication to its mission to provide energy supply to the European continent.

The appeal to the exceptionality theme has relevant implications for Russian relations with Europe. In the long-standing debate on the ‘true’ and ‘false’ Europe that has often informed West-Russian relations, the uniqueness and ‘truth’ of the South Stream project implies its superiority as opposed to the ‘false’ nature of the EU-backed project. By putting emphasis on the distinctiveness of the South Stream pipeline, Russia also engages in an ‘othering’ process towards the EU. Russia in fact aims to contest the role of the EU and to implicitly impose itself as the legitimate provider of energy security in Europe. As Russian Ambassador to the EU Vladimir Chizhov stated:

‘The European Commission should adapt its internal legislation to the bilateral agreements Russia signed with six EU countries for building the South Stream

⁷¹⁰ T., Hopf, Identity, Legitimacy, and the Use of Military Force: Russia’s Great Power Identities and Military Intervention in Abkhazia’. *Review of International Studies*, No.31, 2005, pp. 238-240

⁷¹¹ The South Stream Transport Consortium’s Website, Five Questions and Answers. Available from: <http://www.south-stream.info/en/press/faq/>. Accessed 16/01/2013

⁷¹² Geropoulos, K., *Putin: I’m Watching You*, Oettinger, New Europe, 8 October 2011. Available from: <http://www.neweurope.eu/blog/putin-im-watching-you-oettinger>. Accessed 10/11/2013

Further declarations in this sense can be found on the South Stream Transport Consortium’s Website. For example: ‘Russia possesses the world’s largest natural gas reserves. Due to such a unique potential, we can affirm that South Stream could be fed with gas to the full extent even today’. See The South Stream Transport Consortium’s Website, Five Questions and Answers. Available from: <http://www.south-stream.info/en/press/faq/>. Accessed 16/01/2013.

pipeline, and not the other way around'.⁷¹³

In doing so, Russian discourse confirms the narrative tradition of its belonging to Europe and its 'European calling'. Conversely, the type of Kozyrevian narrative according to which the national interest of Russian people and domestic stabilization should be prioritized over imperial ambitions, is downplayed.

To sum up, the initial quest for 'Europeanness' has been gradually replaced with claims for distinctiveness and 'particularism'. The balance between 'Europeanness' and exceptionalism implies a reshaping of Russia's spatial identity in Europe and it is indicative of a gradual move in Russia's vision of 'Europe' from a 'white zone' to a 'grey zone'.

Overall, in the case of Nabucco-South Stream politics, the identity formation process involves the construction of boundaries in the European continent and demarcation varies. Both actors share the vision of Europe as 'white zone'. However, spatial demarcation gradually became more evident and has determined 'Europe' as a 'grey' or even 'red' (see EU exclusion of South Stream) zone. These spatial identities are complemented by historical representations involving temporal schemes such as development and change. In other words, the historical narrative of 'non-exclusion' and the embedded positive representation of the Other as a 'partner' in a cooperative scenario, gradually transforms into another historical narrative based on a confrontational scenario. This is, in turn, indicative of a gradual widening of the 'degree of Otherness' from both sides. As such, as the degree widens, the actors' construction of their identity as more ethical than the Other's also became more evident.⁷¹⁴

In addition, discursive practices that depict Russian South Stream as a 'threat' and that reveal a mutual distrust between the two actors demonstrates a further widening of the 'degree of Otherness' which occurred in the Nabucco-South Stream discursive interaction.

⁷¹³ EurActiv, *Russia: EU Should Adapt Its Legislation To The South Stream Bilaterals*, 14 January 2014. Available from : <http://www.euractiv.com/energy/russia-eu-adapt-legislation-sout-news-532735>
Accessed 15/01/2014

It should be noted that, at the time of this statement, the Shah Deniz consortium had already rejected the Nabucco pipeline project in favor of the TAP pipeline.

⁷¹⁴ See for example the discursive strategy of discrediting the Other's project or Russia's claims depicting South Stream as an important project '*to the European continent and even to the whole world*', quoted by The South Stream Transport Consortium's Website, *Opinions*

7 The EU's Image of Russian South Stream as A 'Threat' and the Theme of Mutual Distrust

From the EU side, the 'othering' practice towards Russia is complemented by evidence of the historical Western European representation of Russia as a 'threat'. In this respect, Russia is, for example, described as a country that achieves its goals through pressuring its neighbours and employing 'divide and rule' tactics to secure the support of MSs and thus, undermine the EU's internal unity. Similarly, bringing the analysis to layer two, the EU seems to perceive Russian energy security strategy as led by geopolitical considerations (RE paradigm) – as opposed to the economic logic (MI paradigm).⁷¹⁵ If we apply the two levels of analysis – the historical level of layer one, and the policy-specific one in layer two – to the case study here investigated, it can be demonstrated how elements of the representation of Russia as a 'threat' recur also in the context of the Nabucco and South Stream projects. In this case, the image of 'threat' derives from two perceptions: Russia as an imperial country at the border of Europe that pressures European countries (not necessarily MSs) to win their support in favour of South Stream; and Russia as a country that plays the 'divide and rule' tactic with MSs undermining the EU's unity.

As an illustration that the EU's discursive practices tend to represent Russia as a country using political pressure on its neighbours, it can be noted how Oettinger has clearly urged Russia to prevent itself from obstructing the Nabucco project by exerting pressure on Central Asian countries which are potentially the EU's natural gas suppliers and key transit routes for Nabucco.⁷¹⁶

Moreover, the construction of Russia as a 'threat' playing the divide and rule tactic comes from a series of symbolic acts aiming to increasingly exert influence on states that are of a crucial relevance to the construction of Nabucco. These attempts sit in

⁷¹⁵ As the Moldovan case demonstrated, while urging Member States to support Moldova in its troubled energy relations with its Russian supplier, Commissioner Oettinger declared: 'Our Russian partners should see there is a common approach from the EU, and Putin cannot play this game of divide-and-rule. D., Keating, *Commissioner Urges EU to Face Down Russia on Energy*, EuropeanVoice, 11 October 2012. Available from: <http://www.europeanvoice.com/article/imported/commissioner-urges-eu-to-face-down-russia-on-energy/75339.aspx> Accessed 20/01/2013

⁷¹⁶ Novinite, *EU Energy Commissioner Asks Russia to Let Nabucco Live*, 28 March 2011, Available from : http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=126718 Accessed 20/10/2013

contradiction to the initial non-antagonistic discourse that informed the debate over the Nabucco and South Stream projects.

As noted in the introduction of this chapter and in the methodology chapter, the identities of the Self and the Other are ultimately constructed in discursive practices, which encompass both linguistic and behavioural practices, that is, both language and action.⁷¹⁷ In particular, a symbolic act is an episode that has little practical impact but that acquires interpretive power in the light of a specific narrative context.

From this perspective, the Russian strategy aimed to undermine Nabucco by isolating its two final markets for its gas – Hungary and Austria – and can be read as antagonistic. The first target was Hungary. President Bush's trip to Hungary on 22 June 2006 was pre-empted by Alexei Miller, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors of Gazprom, who anticipated the President by a day to Budapest in order to discuss the Southern European Gas Pipeline.⁷¹⁸ Moreover, in a 2007 interview, Hungarian Prime Minister, Ferenc Gyurcsany, was quoted as saying 'The Nabucco has been a long dream and an old plan...But we don't need dreams. We need projects.'⁷¹⁹ Despite the EU's attempt to react through a conference organized by the EC in which Gyurcsany publicly asserted his support for Nabucco, the First Deputy Prime Minister of Russia, Viktor Zubkov, visited Hungary on 7 December and secured the Hungarian leader's commitment to South Stream. Subsequently, Dmitry Medvedev, visited Hungary on 25 February 2008.⁷²⁰ This was followed by a ceremony in Moscow on 28 February 2008 during which Gyurcsany officially signed the South Stream agreement.⁷²¹

While negotiations with Hungary were ongoing, Putin and Miller widened their strategy against Nabucco by including Austria, another of Nabucco's final markets. In May 2007 they visited Vienna and signed the OMV-Gazprom MoU.⁷²² Then, on 25 January 2008,

⁷¹⁷ P. J. Wennerstein, *The Politics of Inclusion. The Case of the Baltic States*, *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 34, No. 3, 1999, pp. 273-278

⁷¹⁸ Baran, *Security Aspects of the South Stream Project*, p.13

⁷¹⁹ J. Dempsey, *Hungary Chooses Gazprom Over EU*, *The International Herald Tribune*, 12 March 2007. Available from: http://www.b92.net/eng/news/globe-article.php?yyyy=2007&mm=03&dd=13&nav_category=123&nav_id=40107 Accessed 03/01/2013, quoted by Baran, *Security Aspects of the South Stream Project*, p.13

⁷²⁰ Baran, *Security Aspects of the South Stream Project*, p.13

⁷²¹ V. Socor, *South Stream Gas Project Defeating Nabucco by Default*, *The Jamestown Foundation*, 5 March 2008. Available from: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=33432 Accessed 28/01/2013

⁷²² V. Socor, *OMV Joins With Gazprom to Undercut Nabucco*, *The Jamestown Foundation*, 29 January 2008 Available from: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=33332 Accessed 28/01/2013

Alexander Medvedev visited Austria and secured the Baumgarten agreement with the Austrian state-dominated OMV energy company. This can be considered as a major success of the Russian divide and rule tactic, as the Austrian city of Baumgarten had already been selected as Nabucco's terminal point. Furthermore, in June 2008 OMV – the company acting as coordinator for Nabucco – was invited to cover the same role for South Stream.⁷²³ The significance of such a Russian success also impacts on the relationship between symbolic acts and material power. These symbolic acts can be read in line with Putin's pragmatic statism according to which Russia should challenge the EU's role as agenda-setter of energy governance in Europe. As such, Russian South Stream should contest the EU's spatial identity as an embodiment of the 'true' Europe and demonstrate the possibility to construct a Russian-Europe with Russia as a pivotal player.

Further evidence of the divide and rule strategy comes in relation to Bulgaria. After long talks, Bulgaria and Russia signed an intergovernmental agreement for the construction of the Bulgarian section of the South Stream gas transit pipeline in the presence of their Prime Ministers, Boyko Borisov and Putin in Sofia. However, Bulgaria had also expressed interest in the construction of Nabucco. In order to push Bulgaria away from Nabucco, Russia offered Bulgaria lower gas prices in exchange for its continued support of the South Stream project (July 2010).⁷²⁴ In the same month, the US ambassador in Sofia, James Warlick, promised a \$400 million investment in Bulgaria for energy projects sponsored by the American AES Solar Energy. He underlined that the implementation of this investment was linked to the approval of the Bulgarian government, which would not have any cost to bear.⁷²⁵ In making such a proposal, Ambassador Warlick repeated that Bulgaria should follow the energy priorities set by its Euro-Atlantic orientation. In addition, on 27 July 2010, Bulgarian President, Boyko Borisov, and Economic and Energy Minister, Traycho Traykov, met with Greek President, Georgios Papandreou, to discuss three pipeline projects with Russia (e.g. South Stream, B-A and Belene). Nabucco was vaguely mentioned. On the same day, Commissioner Oettinger decided to deliver a speech at a conference on energy security and investments in the Black Sea. Such an act sounded like a reminder

⁷²³ Baran, *Security Aspects of the South Stream Project*, p.14

⁷²⁴ R., Kovacheva, *Energy Coincidences (Or Not?)*, euinside, 10 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.euinside.eu/en/analyses/energy-coincidences-or-not> Accessed 20/01/2013

⁷²⁵ Embassy of The United States in Sofia, *AES Solar Energy Ready to Invest USD 400 Million in Bulgaria*, 28 July 2010. Available from: http://bulgaria.usembassy.gov/event_07282010.html Accessed 23/01/2013

for Bulgaria to consider also the EU's energy priorities including the Southern Corridor Initiative⁷²⁶ and thus Nabucco. After the meeting with his Greek counterpart, Traykov went to Odessa, where he was expected to participate in a panel on energy challenges in the Black Sea region, together with Oettinger.

This seems to suggest that although pressured from Russia, the Bulgarian government aimed to reassure the EU that it has not overlooked its commitment to the EU's energy priority regarding the Southern Corridor Initiative. In fact, the draft of the National Energy Strategy confirmed that, despite discussing the Russian pipeline projects with Greece, Bulgaria's energy priorities ultimately overlapped with those of the EU.⁷²⁷

Overall, Russian imperial ambition to achieve ownership in the security of supply in Europe through pressure on non-EU states; thus undermining the EU's unity, and the Russian challenge to the EU's role as leader in energy governance in Europe, triggered the EU's negative representation of Russia as 'threat' to the energy security and stability of the European continent.

In January 2009, addressing a summit dedicated to the Nabucco project in Budapest, the Czech Prime Minister, Topolanek, holding the EU Presidency – and thus representing the EU (although not specifically the EC) clearly described Russia's pipeline projects as aimed at perpetuating Europe's energy dependency. The South Stream project was defined as a 'direct threat' to Nabucco.⁷²⁸

As such, the sense of competition that seems to occur in a technical issue (such as Nabucco vs South Stream) ultimately spills over into a more profound identity contest regarding who controls the game of energy security in 'Europe'. As it emerges, the representation of Russia as a 'threat' means that Russia is depicted as Other of the 'true' EU-Europe. However, on the other side, the EU cannot overlook the key role of Russia as its main energy supplier. Given its dual role of indispensable supplier and 'threat' to Europe, it is necessary for the EU discourse to emphatically set the relations

⁷²⁶ G., Oettinger, Speech of Commissioner Oettinger at the International Odessa Forum, Press Release SPEECH, 27 July 2010. Available from : http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-10-402_en.htm?locale=en Accessed 20/01/2013

⁷²⁷ The draft proposal says: *'Bulgaria has a direct interest and will directly participate in the realisation of strategic EU initiatives to build the necessary infrastructure and diversification of energy supplies for the EU - namely the Southern Gas Corridor, access to liquefied natural gas (LNG) and transmission links of the axis North-South etc. Given the high gas dependence and inadequate energy infrastructure in the country, these initiatives are of particular importance for us and for the entire region of Southeast Europe'*. See Kovacheva, *Energy Coincidences (Or Not?)*

⁷²⁸ Khasson, *Discourses and Interests in EU-Russia Energy Relations*, p.14

in the terms of a friendly and sympathetic partnership and, at the same time, gradually try to decrease the role of the alleged Russian ‘partner’: ‘We have to reduce dependency on Russia without backing out of our strategic relation with Russia, which has characterized our last ten years and will characterize the next 10 years’.⁷²⁹

The EU’s intention to keep the Russian giant calm is also evident through reassuring messages that reject the view that the EU is overdependent on Russia.⁷³⁰ For example, as a symbolic act, Oettinger even participated in the ceremony in the compressor station Portovaya in the Russian city of Viborg (April, 2010), where the construction of another Russian-backed pipeline, North Stream, had started.

On this ground, the EU’s celebration of a pipeline that increases the dependence on Russia contradicts the Commission discourse that underlines the need to diversify energy towards non-Russian sources.⁷³¹ In other words, the great emphasis that the Commission discourse put on diversification of routes (other than Russia’s), sits in contradiction with the participation in the starting of the North Stream pipeline and the reassurances regarding overdependence on Russian supply.

As such, the EC constructs its interests around different discursive practices, which, in turn, embed a specific position for Russia. Russia is a partner when the EU needs more guarantees for its energy supply (e.g. North Stream). However, when the contestation for Europe’s leadership in energy governance is at stake, overdependence on Russia is seen as problematic and hinders the aim of diversification. Ultimately, Russia is constructed as a untrustworthy supplier from whom it is better to be less dependent.

On the Russian side, a sense of suspicion towards the EU can also be noted. This leads to the construction of the EU as a ‘threat’ to Russia. In this respect, European attempts to diversify energy supply bypassing Russia are interpreted as acts driven by distrust. Despite almost forty years of reliable supply, the EU’s concerns turn out to be deceitful and mortifying.⁷³² In this respect, questioned on the possible conflict deriving from the

⁷²⁹ A.J., Burgess, *German Oettinger Wastes Little Energy Impressing MEPs*, La Treizieme Etoile, 14 January 2010. Available from: <http://andrewjburgess-eu.blogspot.com/2010/01/german-oettinger-wastes-little-energy.html> Accessed 20/01/2013

See also M., Schepp and S., Christoph *Drifting Apart: Summit Underscores EU Tensions with Russia*, Spiegel Online, 20 December 2012. Available from: <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/brussels-summit-casts-light-on-eu-differences-with-russia-a-874033.html> Accessed 03/01/2013

⁷³⁰ In particular, Oettinger stated: ‘I do not think that the EU as such is too much dependent on Russian gas. We also do not have to worry about increasing Russian gas volumes coming to the EU’. Oettinger, *Energy Dialogue: Russia European Union. Gas Aspects*, p. 3

⁷³¹ Kovacheva, *Energy Coincidences (Or Not?)*

⁷³² D., Böhme, *EU-Russia Energy Relations: What Chance for Solutions? A Focus on the Natural Gas Sector*, University of Potsdam : Potsdam, 2011, pp.30-31

Austrian participation in the Nabucco and South Stream projects, Putin challenged the EU's diversification discourse by asserting that: 'I hear this thesis all the time, that it is necessary to ensure independence from Russian gas supplies. And I always want to ask a question: why would you want that? There is a good saying: it if ain't broke, don't fix it'.⁷³³ Broad implication can be drawn from this last statement. Hinting at the fact that the EU is 'illogically' seeking to switch its source of supply although the current supplier (Russia) is reliable, Putin's affirmation grasps Western contradiction in its essence. Why does the EU support the construction of the Nabucco project running the risk that other non-Russian suppliers could be less reliable and/or encounter insufficient energy reserve, when Russia has proven to be reliable and endowed with the necessary reserves?

This feeds doubts on the authenticity of the EU diversification discourse that is instead driven by geopolitical calculations. In fact, Putin's belief is that the EU's attempt to decrease dependence on Russian gas comes from the dominance of geopolitical reasoning of harming Russian interests. Such reasoning poses a challenge to the interest-based assumption of rationalist accounts. The EU seems to breach the objective rationality that would instead suggest sticking with a secure energy provider for its own security of supply. Interests should instead be read within the framework of mutual representations and discourses.

In addition, the proposed layered structure also marks a progression from existing discourse-based accounts. In fact, on the basis of the representations derived from layer one and layer two (historical narratives and energy paradigms) of the layered structure it is possible to explain how Russia depicts the EU as an actor that follows a geopolitical paradigm to achieve its energy security rather than an economic logic (see layer two).⁷³⁴ As a consequence, discursive elements of pragmatic statism and Eurasianism identified in layer one are played out to reproduce the West as the entity acting to weaken Russian geopolitical interests and its position in the international arena.

A number of more factual circumstances contribute to provide a further basis to test and complement the representational-based interpretation of the Nabucco-South Stream politics proposed in this chapter.

⁷³³ Government of Russian Federation, *Transcript of the Prime Minister Vladimir Putin Meets with Participants of the 7th meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club in Sochi*

⁷³⁴ See for example, the ambiguity around the EU's diversification discourse.

The South Stream project is expected to cost twice as much as Nabucco and, as some analysts argue, it is expected to generate a scenario of oversupply towards the EU that would imply a decrease in gas price. All these indicators characterize this project as economically non-viable. The intention to build South Stream, despite the fact that it is likely to be the most expensive pipeline in the world, points to the main driver being the geopolitical objective to oppose Nabucco and to consolidate Russian presence in the region rather than an economic logic. As noted in layer two, such a move is consistent with an RE vision of energy security. Russia prefers to proceed with its costly project in the belief that abandoning it would imply a political victory for the adversary and a reputational loss vis-à-vis the West.⁷³⁵ This can be seen as reflecting the anti-Western narrative of neo-Eurasianism and the dominant narrative in the Cold War time during which the West was the enemy to defeat, the entity that undermines Russia's progress. In particular, the cooperation with Western European energy companies to accomplish the South Stream project reflects the neo-Eurasian belief that cooperation with Europeans is possible only within an anti-western perspective (neo-Euroasianism). On the other side, the fact that the EU insisted on backing the Nabucco project despite the huge degree of uncertainty around the supplier of the pipeline⁷³⁶, reinforces the perception that the EU is instead inspired by the geopolitical aim to counter Russian energy strategy. South Stream instead offers simpler and more secure alternative to Nabucco.

In principle South Stream represents stable gas supplies for Europe as – unlike Nabucco – it relies on a secure supplier (Russia) and does not cross unstable regions of Central Asia and the Caucasus. Furthermore, it bypasses the Ukrainian territory – on which 80% of Russian gas supplies to Europe transit – preventing the risk that Russian–Ukrainian disputes affect supply to Europe as occurred in 2006 and 2009. The preference for a project that is in principle more ‘insecure’ not only contradicts the EU's discourse on security of supply but confirms claims regarding the geopolitical character of the EU's strategy (RE paradigm in layer two). Following a rationalist account, the South Stream pipeline would be a better fit with the EU's interest in security of supply.

⁷³⁵ Baev, and Overland, *The South Stream versus Nabucco Pipeline Race: Geopolitical and Economical (ir)rationales and Political Stakes in Mega Projects*, pp. 1075–1090. Available from : http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/International%20Affairs/2010/86_5baev_overland.pdf Accessed: 5/5/2013

⁷³⁶ In fact, given sanctions and strong opposition from the US, Iran would represent a politically unrealistic supplier. Iraq is also an unstable country, while the ex-Soviet countries of Central Asia are seen as the object of Russian pressure and are likely to favour relations with Russia or China.

Conversely, by focusing on the role of the Self/Other discursive interaction, other post-structuralist or discourse-based accounts would introduce the notion of ‘otherness’ that reinforces the dichotomy ‘us’ and ‘them’, and rejects the fixed ‘reality’ of the rationalist tradition (realism and liberalism).⁷³⁷ This dynamic can be grasped through a focus on the intersubjective interaction with the Other. The pre-given nature of interests is also questioned in favour of a vision that rather sees interests as socially constructed and framed within a discourse.

However, the existing discourse-based approaches⁷³⁸ would limit their examination to illustrate how the EU and Russia employ their energy paradigms in the pipeline politics and how – especially on the EU’s side – the aim to diversify energy supplies by decreasing dependence on Russian pipelines (‘diversification discourse’) contradicts with the competing discourse of ‘integrating Russia’ in the EU’s political space. In short, they would limit their account to layer two level. Conversely, the proposed approach broadens the analysis to include how historical representations – which construct the various possibilities of Otherness (‘degree of Otherness’) – are played out in the energy field (layer two) and, then, in the discursive practices informing the Nabucco-South Stream politics (layer three).

From this perspective, the proposed reading hypothesises that a narrow ‘degree of Otherness’ explains the benevolent positions of both actors as well as claims in favour of ‘co-existence’ and ‘non-competition’ between the two pipeline projects. Conversely, the EU’s ‘normative’ insistence in favour of the EU-sponsored Nabucco, despite huge uncertainty about its supplier, is indicative that a negative representation of mistrust towards the Russian Other is at play.

8 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to explain the politics behind Nabucco and South Stream through mutual representations and discourses rather than through a mere conflict of

⁷³⁷ J., Der Derrian, *The (S)pace of International Relations : Simulation, Surveillance and Speed*, *International Study Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No.3, 1990, p.298

⁷³⁸ See for example Pick, *EU-Russia Energy Relations: A critical analysis*, for critical accounts. See for example Khasson, *Discourses and Interests in EU-Russia Energy Relations*, and Tichy and Kratochvil, *EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations*, for discourse-based approaches.

different interests. In order to do this, the discourse landscape has been mapped to construct the 'degree of Otherness', that is, to identify how the representation of Other unveiled in the narratives and discourses of layers one and two are actually operative in the pipeline debate.

Contrary to readings of the Nabucco-South Stream that derive the antagonist element from a pre-constituted difference in actors' interests or (mis)perceptions (e.g. realism and liberalism), this approach enables us to understand not only antagonism but also cooperation through mutual representations and competing projects on 'Europe'. Furthermore, the contribution of this approach to existing constructivists and discourse-based accounts⁷³⁹ is that the meaning of the discursive practices played out in the Nabucco-South Stream politics (documents, speeches, statements and symbolic acts) is examined in light of a broader discursive structure that encompasses the energy paradigm of actors and their historical representations. In other words, the meaning of documents, speeches, statements and symbolic acts analyzed is not only the one derivable from their mere textual reading. Rather, these documents, speeches, statements and symbolic acts acquire a broader meaning through the three-layered discursive structure that takes into account how the actors have historically represented each other (layer one) and which energy paradigm they employed in their mutual relations (layer two).

Another contribution is to the specific strand of the literature that merely assumes actors' identity and modus operandi as 'different'. In fact, from a constructivist angle, this strand argues that the EU's aim is to introduce its universal liberal agenda into the Russian energy sector, which operates according to different logics.⁷⁴⁰ Rather than assuming such a 'difference', the proposed account allows for a focus on how this difference is spatially, temporally and ethically situated.⁷⁴¹ It also represents a progression from existing discourse-based approaches as it focuses on the way in which these three dimensions of identity construction interrelate. The analysis of this

⁷³⁹ See for example Khasson, *Discourses and Interests in EU-Russia Energy Relations*; Tichy and Kratochvil, *EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations*

⁷⁴⁰ See for example, H., Haukkala, The Role of Norms and Values in the European Union's Russia Policy, in J. Gower, and G. Timmins, eds., *Russia and Europe in the Twenty-First Century: an Uneasy Partnership*, London: Anthem Press, 2007, pp.133-148 quoted by Pick, *EU-Russia Energy Relations: A critical analysis*, p.323

See also K., Westphal, Energy Policy between Multilateral Governance and Geopolitics: Whither Europe? *Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft*, Vol. 4, 2006, pp. 44-62 quoted by Pick, *EU-Russia Energy Relations: A critical analysis*, p.323

⁷⁴¹ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, 45-51

interrelation sheds light on how political subjectivities are constituted as well as on the possibility for analyzing differences and similarities between discourses and their changes over time.

From an initial analysis, the official discourses played out by the EC and Russia are characterized by a benevolent narrative in which both actors hold a non-threatening representation of the Other (low degree of Otherness). Through their projects, both actors are working to ensure the security of supply of the European continent (Europe as a 'white zone'). However, from a closer examination, discourses and symbolic acts signal that the 'degree of Otherness' gradually widens. Therefore, the political implication is that the counterpart is gradually represented as the 'Other' of 'Europe'. This indicates the presence of a contestation among competing projects on 'Europe' – seen as a 'grey' or even 'red' zone – and, thus, the existence of a discursive antagonism. The technical dispute on the two pipelines discloses in reality a deeper challenge. For the EU, South Stream is more than a mere competing project on energy; it rather embodies a competing project on 'Europe'. Similarly, for Russia, Nabucco represents the EU's attempt to reiterate its hegemonic project to Westernize Europe.

As the degree of Otherness widens, a logic of competition in both layer one and layer two emerges. This is further confirmed by the discursive practice of comparison and mutual discrediting that both parties have utilized to denigrate the competitor's pipeline project. Such logic evokes the typical confrontational scheme that was dominant during the Cold War where contestation had a geopolitical tone: the race for the construction of pipelines for 'Europe' recalls the race for world leadership. The contestation between Nabucco and South Stream within a context of the New Cold War portrays a case in which the EU and Russia employ the geopolitical energy paradigm (RE in layer two). Such a scenario permits us to scale down the layered structure to layer one and demonstrate how Russia has engaged in its typical divide and rule tactic and resorted to its historical exceptionalist narrative while the EC proved its legacy to its typical Othering vocation as well as Europeanisation and Eurocentric language.

The discursive practices analyzed also depict a scenario in which both parties trigger an 'othering' process representing a confrontational discursive landscape. On the Russian side, by presenting South Stream as a simpler and more secure option to Nabucco, Russia aims to 'other' the EU by limiting its role of leader in the energy governance of Europe, and excluding other Nabucco suppliers (e.g. in Central Asia) which may

undermine the quasi-monopolistic position of Gazprom.

A representation of West/Western Europe as a ‘threat’ emerges in that it attempts to lessen dependence on Russia and thus undermine Russian interest (e.g. pragmatic statism and Eurasianism in layer one).

On the other side, with the rejection of the Russian attempt to bless South Stream as a European project and the intention to build a pipeline without Russian involvement, the EU demonstrated its opposition to Russian inclusion as a legitimate actor in the European space and confirmed its representation as the threatening ‘Other’ of Europe. In addition, the emphasis on the discourse of reducing dependency from Russia reflects an RE understanding of energy security (layer two) according to which a player aims to avoid overdependence on other players. This is seen as a source of concern and ultimately threatening to self-security. As a result of this analysis, it can be said that the EU’s understanding of international politics in this area is closer to the realist anarchic world.

The next chapter turns its focus to examine the case of the EU-Russia ED. The literature has extensively explained the dialogue as a relationship between two different actors that take on cooperative and integrative practices but with modest results on technical issues because of their essential ‘difference’.⁷⁴²

Rather than analysing actors’ divergence on technical issues, Morozov⁷⁴³ provides an innovative perspective by arguing that a more fundamental identity conflict on actors’ idea of Europe is at stake. However, while he focuses on explaining the identity conflict between the EU and Russia in the ED, he treats such a conflict as given. The next chapter instead explains how the actors discursively move from cooperative to confrontational positions and illustrates how such a shift has also implications for the political construction of ‘Europe’. In addition, the historical narratives and representations of the Self in relation to the Other, outlined in chapter 3, help understand the move from the image of ‘partner’ to that of confrontational ‘Other’ or ‘learner’ (‘degree of Otherness’). In addition, the conceptualization of the ED through the historical encounter of identities, allow us to grasp how a mutual process of identity construction (constructive power of outsiders) also occurs in this case study.

⁷⁴² See for example Romanova, *The Russian Perspective on the Energy Dialogue*. See also Hadfield, *EU-Russia Energy Relations: Aggregation and Aggravation*

⁷⁴³ Morozov, in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe’s Future Energy Security*

Chapter 6 - Layer Three (2): The EU-Russia Energy Dialogue: A Rethink

1 Introduction

This chapter provides empirical evidence to demonstrate the socially constructed nature of energy security in the context of EU-Russia energy relations. The chapter employs a narrative analysis to the case of the EU-Russia ED and it aims to understand what such a relationship means for the construction of ‘Europe’.

As explained throughout the thesis, deeper examination of EU-Russia energy relations needs to consider technical problems, political issues and discursive structures as interrelated and ultimately dependent on EU and Russian mutual understanding based on historical representations as well as on their political projects of Europe.⁷⁴⁴ In this perspective, it emerges that the way in which questions related to energy governance are handled might have relevant implications and meanings not only for the ‘energy security’ of both parties, but also for the entire political structure of Europe.

As noted, one of the aims of this thesis is to explore EU-Russian energy relations through a discursive approach. According to Ringmar, the stories we tell ourselves about things are only one kind of narrative among many, and as such they have no privileged status. Social scientists should discard their belief in the existence of a unified, coherent and transcendental truth or identity.⁷⁴⁵ There is no underlying ‘essence’ which guarantees our integrity and which makes it possible for us to order our preferences coherently over time and between narrative contexts. In this perspective, a discursive approach considers identities and its preferences as constructed through and dependent on discourses. As such, each discourse put forward to justify an actor’s argument or interest relies on a specific identity told by the actor itself. However, the relationship between interests and identity is not fixed per se but it holds as long as identity and interest are framed in a specific discourse. Neither actions nor interests can exist outside of the context of a discourse.

However, given their essential instability, discourses are likely to vary. As a result, the way in which actors define their interests will vary correspondingly. Hence, interests

⁷⁴⁴ See for example Morozov, in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe’s Future Energy Security*

⁷⁴⁵ Ringmar, *Identity, Interests and Action*

can never refer to something that subjects ‘really’ want, but only to what they may want themselves to want before a particular audience. Once the discourse has given meaning to a specific interest, actions will then follow as a consequence. In addition, specific meaning and representations that have been powerful in a specific historical period can be traced and seen as operative in other historical circumstances. In this light, an account phrased only in terms of interests can by itself never be enough. Instead, the triangular relationship narrative-identity-interests provides a more comprehensive and organic structure to study social science.

When an identity is in the process of being established (‘formative moment’) or is maintained as dominant, old meanings are contested and new meanings are advanced with the help of discourses. These new discourse put forward a different identity-interests relation through which new stories about the Self are introduced and a new identity is shaped.⁷⁴⁶ Essentially, the contestation is, therefore first over identities and subsequently over interests.⁷⁴⁷

From this perspective, the Wæverian layered structure is rooted in the conviction that any attempt to pursue a specific interest will not be successful as long as this discursive structure is neglected.⁷⁴⁸ Within this approach, the dominance of a discourse over others is maintained through its confirmation and the simultaneous rejection of alternative options. A policy that ignores the structure of meaning will not be recognized as being involved in the struggle for discursive hegemony nor as a viable option in the EU-Russia energy debate. The Wæverian structure of meaning tends to confer on historical trajectory – rather than mere interests – ‘taken for granted’ and sedimented characteristics.⁷⁴⁹

As demonstrated in chapter 3, layer one includes the historical political project on Europe and the mutual representations held respectively by Western Europe and Russia. In particular, Western Europe has shown inclinations to build ‘Europe’ through mainly two competing narratives: the eurocentric ‘civilian empire’ or the cooperative Concert of Europe. As a consequence, relations with Russia have been set according to the formula ‘transformation through integration’ in the European political space, through egalitarianism or through the idea of Russia being the ‘land of the future’.

Russia, for its part, has aspired to pursue its political project on Europe either through a

⁷⁴⁶ Ringmar, *Identity, Interests and Action*, pp. 83-85

⁷⁴⁷ Ringmar, *Identity, Interests and Action*, p. 90

⁷⁴⁸ See Wæver, in Hansen and Wæver, *European Integration and National Identity*

⁷⁴⁹ Wæver, *Ibidem*

representation of itself as ‘Great Power’ that wants to establish its relations with the West/Western Europe on an equal basis in order to preserve its sovereignty, or through a westernising narrative through which Russia subscribes to a leader / follower logic.⁷⁵⁰ Layer two demonstrated how this narrative background – and its representations – of layer one are reflected in two main energy paradigms (MI and RE) played out by the EU and Russia. These paradigms are also indicative of the EU’s and Russia’s projects of Europe and they stem from the kind of self and mutual representation in place (eurocentrism or Concert of Europe for Western Europe vs Great Power or ‘follower’ for Russia). The third layer regards specific discursive practices played out by the EU and Russia in two case studies informing their energy relations.

After having analyzed the politics around Nabucco and South Stream, the focus now turns to the ED. These two cases have been picked because the literature commonly explained them by assuming confrontation as the ‘dominant’ discourses.⁷⁵¹ While these readings can be accurate, this thesis rejects the fact that the confrontation is assumed. Rather the aim is to explore how it becomes constructed as ‘dominant’ in the two cases above-mentioned, that is, how dominant discourses overcame the resistance of competing discourses. By doing so, it will be demonstrated that ‘confrontation’ is not a fixed lens of analysis for these two case studies, rather it alternates with ‘cooperation’ discourse and become constructed through the relations with the Other. From this perspective, the assumed confrontational discourses might also be misleading.

This chapter argues that in the context of the ED, the EU’s intention was to deal with Russia as an ‘equal partner’ in facing the problem and finding solutions, that is, to establish an egalitarian discourse enabling Russia to reclaim its subjectivity. The underlying idea was that negative Self / Other perceptions inherited from the Cold War could be overcome through a process of constructing policies, through dialogue rather than negotiation or diktat. However, it will be demonstrated that, while the EU’s discourse attempts to promote change in its energy relations with Russia, the traditional representation of the EU as a eurocentric ‘civilian empire’ occurred in such a way that only served to re-inscribe the negative perception of Russia that the EU seemed willing

⁷⁵⁰ Wæver, Ibidem

⁷⁵¹ Morozov in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe’s Future Energy Security*, for example assumes an identity conflict in the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue. Similarly Baran, *Security Aspects of the South Stream Project*, for example assumes the conflict between the South Stream and Nabucco pipelines.

to erase.

On the other side, Russia – consistent with the ‘Russia Great Power’ narrative and in response to EU’s imperial attitude – attempts to maintain its independence in energy market regulation in the context of the ED. While recognizing the need to reform the energy market towards more liberalization, Russia also acknowledges that changes in domestic legislation will occur ‘at her own pace’ and taking into consideration the specificity of domestic energy market. Russia’s refusal to accept EU rules drawn from the *acquis communautaire* as a long-term basis for mutual energy relations confirms this dynamic.⁷⁵²

It follows that Russia’s long-term vision of the ED differs from the concept that the EC proposes on behalf of the EU. Generally, the EU’s claimed objective is to create a secure regulatory framework inspired by energy liberalization. In principle, this framework will lead to a decrease in the control of public authorities in energy relations while energy companies would mainly be in charge of security energy in Europe. Conversely, the Russian position relies on the concept of equality between partners and preservation of this equality through the action of the state. This, for example, can explain why the Russian state and top representatives have shares in the key national energy companies.⁷⁵³

From this perspective Russia rejects any proposal implying the introduction in Russia of EU’s legislation. Conversely, the objective is to promote a mutual approximation within an international organisation such as the WTO. Importantly, as Romanova reports, Russians even invented a different term: ‘legal convergence’, rather than ‘legal approximation’.⁷⁵⁴

Against this background, it will be demonstrated how the EU’s and Russia’s relations in the ED tell the broader story of their political projects and contest on ‘Europe’ and can be derived from their mutual representations. The critical and discourse-based literature has already investigated the ED. Boute, for example, examines how energy efficiency has been constructed as a new paradigm in EU’s external energy policy, in particular in the context of the ED with Russia.⁷⁵⁵ However, he only analyses one side of the self-

⁷⁵² Romanova, *The Russian Perspective on the Energy Dialogue*, p. 222

⁷⁵³ Romanova, *The Russian Perspective on the Energy Dialogue*, p.225

⁷⁵⁴ Romanova, *The Russian Perspective on the Energy Dialogue*, p.222

⁷⁵⁵ A., Boute, Energy Efficiency as a New Paradigm of the European External Energy Policy: The Case of the EU–Russian Energy Dialogue, *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 65, Issue 6, August 2013, pp. 1021-1054

other relationship played out in the ED, since Russian internal discourse and positions vis a vis the EU are neglected. In addition, the ‘Other’ of the ED is exclusively associated with Russia. This is only one half of the story.

To address this gap, Morozov analyzes the positions of both actors rather than only from a Western perspective.⁷⁵⁶ In doing so, he notes that, despite the aim to promote cooperation, the ED epitomizes how the EU and Russia ultimately play out competing visions of Europe. The EU persists in using its ‘imperial’ and assimilative logic of enlargement in its interaction with Russia insisting on the principle of conditionality. But, this EU position clashes with Russia’s assertion of the sovereign principle. As a consequence, Russia’s interests in energy diverge from the EU ambition of liberalized market. Rather than looking at these disputes as mere technical issues, Morozov rightly indicates that identity questions are at stake.

While drawing from this critical strand, the explanation of the ED proposed here sheds further light on the historical and representation-based origin of the identity-conflict, which Morozov treats as given. With reference to this last point, this chapter also underlines how the representation of the counterpart moves from ‘partnership’ to confrontational ‘Other’ (‘degree of Otherness’).

In addition, this account also focuses on the constructive power of outsiders as a way to explain the mutual identity construction process emanating from the discursive encounter of the actors. In his work, Morozov as well as other authors⁷⁵⁷, seems to overlook this aspect.

Finally, with regard to the structure of this chapter, the following section contextualizes the ED, outlining how its main discourse revolves around the theme of cooperation and de-securitization. A section on the EU approach to the ED will illustrate how elements of ‘othering’ and representations of Russia as an untrustworthy threat are at play along with the established cooperation narrative.

Similarly, an analysis of the Russian approach to the ED will shed light on the continued tension between claims for equal integration as a ‘Great Power’ and the reaffirmation of the ‘sovereign’ narrative. Again, Russia’s positive image of the EU as a ‘partner’ is contradicted by a representation of the counterpart as an untrustworthy

⁷⁵⁶ Morozov in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe’s Future Energy Security*

⁷⁵⁷ See for example Romanova, *The Russian Perspective on the Energy Dialogue*; Hadfield, *EU–Russia Energy Relations: Aggregation and Aggravation*; Tichy and Kratochvil, *EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations*

Other. As indicated throughout the chapter, these discursive strategies and representation dynamics have broader implications for tracing the border of the European continent (spatial identity), as well as on the temporal and ethical construction of actors' identity.

2 The Energy Dialogue and Its Meaning

Towards the end of the twentieth century, both Russian and EU officials viewed the ECT as a fruitless mechanism. Under the auspices of the French EU Presidency Jacques Chirac, Javier Solana, Romano Prodi and the newly elected President Putin announced a 'new phase of institutional, economic and social reforms'⁷⁵⁸ in the relationship between the two partners with energy as the focus of cooperation. To overcome the stalemate of the ongoing Russian rejection of the ECT, the two sides agreed on launching the ED.⁷⁵⁹ The intention to define energy relations in the form of a 'dialogue' discloses a more egalitarian and positive approach compared to the ECT. Such a new approach is visible from the language of the 'dialogue' itself.

In this respect, the repeated use of the word 'partnership' highlights the equivalent position of the two actors: 'The European Union and the Russian Federation have decided at the Paris Summit in October 2000 to establish a strategic Energy Partnership'.⁷⁶⁰

From a linguistic point of view, the term 'dialogue' is not used to gain maximum benefit for the Self, since in a relationship of dialogue 'there is no a priori certainty about who will learn from whom'.⁷⁶¹ The ED proposes the possibility of the emergence

⁷⁵⁸ Commission of European Communities, EU–Russia Summit. Joint Declaration, Press Release IP/00/1239, Paris, 30 October 2000. Available from: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-00-1239_en.htm Accessed 20/01/2013

⁷⁵⁹ Hadfield, *EU-Russia Energy Relations: Aggregation and Aggravation*

⁷⁶⁰ Commission of the European Communities, The EU-Russia Energy Dialogue, Synthesis Report, September 2001, p. 1. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/international/bilateral_cooperation/russia/doc/reports/progress1_en.pdf Accessed 20/01/2013

⁷⁶¹ A., Linklater, The Achievement of Critical Theory, in S., Smith, K., Booth and M., Zalewski, eds., *International Theory : Positivism and Beyond*, Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1996, quoted by K.M., Fierke, Dialogues of Manoeuvre and Entanglement: NATO, Russia, and the CEECs, *Millennium- Journal of international Studies*, Vol.28, No.1 1999, p. 27, quoted by Browning, *The Region-Building Approach Revisited: The Continued Othering of Russia in Discourses of Region-Building in the European North*, p. 49

of a strategic inter-subjectivity as opposed to a subject-object relationship. As Fierke notes, relations based on ‘dialogue’ differ from relations set on negotiation. While ‘negotiation’ is a confrontational communication revolving around a ‘we–them’ relationship, within which each party tries to maximize its own interests, a ‘dialogue’ reflects instead a problem-solving approach that leads actors to recognize mutual subjectivity and ‘empathize with the experience and suffering of the other’.⁷⁶² In a dialogue, therefore, the other participant is considered as an ‘equal partner’. From this perspective, an initial analysis suggests that the ED is an example of ‘dialogue’ rather than a ‘negotiation’. As such, a number of joint official documents on the ED make frequent reference to developing an egalitarian relationship of ‘dialogue’ and ‘partnership’. For example, the joint declaration that launched the ED reports:

‘We, the leaders of the European Union and the Russian Federation, meeting in Paris for the sixth summit since the entry into force of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), reaffirm the particular importance we attach to strengthening our strategic partnership, based on the principles of democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law and the market economy.’⁷⁶³

The language of egalitarianism is often repeated in the yearly ‘Progress Reports’ on the status of the ED: ‘Parties note the importance of equal conditions and equivalent basic rules relating to market’.⁷⁶⁴ As a confirmation of the equal status of the partners in Europe, the ED specifies that parties are expected to work together to: ‘Enhance the energy security of the European continent by binding Russia and the EU into a closer relationship in which all issues of mutual concern in the energy sector can be addressed’.⁷⁶⁵ Furthermore, by referring to cooperation in a number of energy issues of ‘mutual concern’, the ED implicitly recognizes Russia and the EU as actors contributing to the security of energy in Europe.

⁷⁶² Fierke, *Ibidem*

⁷⁶³ Commission of the European Communities, *EU-Russia Energy Dialogue: The First Ten Years*, 2011b, Brussels, p. 6. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/publications/doc/2011_eu-russia_energy_relations.pdf Accessed 20/01/2013

⁷⁶⁴ Commission of European Communities, *The EU-Russia Energy Dialogue*, 6th Progress Report, Moscow-Brussels, 2005. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/russia/joint_progress/doc/progress6_en.pdf Accessed 20/01/2013

⁷⁶⁵ Commission of the European Communities, *EU – Russia Energy Dialogue*, Press Release MEMO 09/121, 19 March 2009. Available from: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-09-121_en.htm Accessed 20/01/2013

Along with cooperation on issues related to the energy security of the European continent, the ED calls for partners to cooperate also at regional level: 'EU-Russia Energy Efficiency Initiative included projects on cooperation at regional level, strengthening partnership programs between local and regional energy efficiency centers in the EU and Russia'.⁷⁶⁶

In this light, it can be argued that the ED promotes 'desecuritization' as the dominant theme to govern energy relations between the partners. The desecuritization theme was introduced by the so-called Copenhagen School⁷⁶⁷ and refers to the discursive strategy according to which the avoidance of the language of security – in favour of other issues – will result in the enhancement of security per se.⁷⁶⁸

Arguing that the political discourse of the ED is 'desecuritized' implies an improvement of mutual relations. Within the desecuritization narrative, the possibility of constructing each other's identities in antagonistic terms is reduced, thus, the 'degree of Otherness' is narrow.

'Desecuritization' has implications also for the construction of actors' spatial identity as 'European'. In fact, the reported claims in favour of cooperation and equality demonstrate a common understanding of 'Europe' as a united continent with no clear boundaries ('white zone') as well as actors' equal inclusion in the European Concert. In addition, by promoting energy cooperation, both actors re-conceptualize their mutual identities in terms of 'commonness' rather than antagonism. For example, the emphasis on the possibility to create convergence and integration between the European and Russian energy markets expresses the ambition to construct that commonality: 'Regulatory convergence...will permit the progressive integration of the EU and Russian energy markets'.⁷⁶⁹

The ED also adheres to the liberal paradigm of MI (layer two) as it makes a connection between the theme of integration and that of mutual interdependence. As explained by the liberal-institutionalists, Keohane and Nye,⁷⁷⁰ interdependence leads both sides to neglect conflictual issues and focus on long-term mutually beneficial solutions. In the ED the interdependence between the two actors is clearly specified. In this respect, the

⁷⁶⁶ Commission of European Communities, *EU-Russia Energy Dialogue: The First Ten Years*, p. 68

⁷⁶⁷ See B., Buzan, O., Wæver, and J., de Wilde eds., *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 1998

⁷⁶⁸ V., Morozov, Russia in the Baltic Sea Region Desecuritization or Deregionalization?, *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 39, No. 3, 2004d, p.318.

⁷⁶⁹ Commission of European Communities, *The EU-Russia Energy Dialogue, 6th Progress Report.*, p.6

⁷⁷⁰ R.O., Keohane, J.S., Nye, Power and interdependence, *Survival*, Vol.15, Issue 4, 1973, pp. 158–165

yearly ‘Progress Reports’ specify that the relationship is not asymmetrical but there is interdependence between the two partners: ‘EU and Russia are interdependent in terms of energy relations’⁷⁷¹ This interdependence has to continue since both sides are encouraged ‘to further develop their relations’⁷⁷² in the future. As such, although the official joint documents describe the interdependence between the EU and Russia mainly through economic figures, the acknowledgment of the interdependent and symmetric nature of energy relations between the EU and Russia can be read as a confirmation of the egalitarian character of the ED.

If we look at the ED through the lens of the historical relations of the two partners, it emerges that the ED offers a way out of the Cold War ‘us-them’ contraposition and the conventional East-West dichotomy. Similarly, the ED decreases the polarization between the historical narratives of Eurocentrism and ‘Great Power Russia’. As a result, the historical divisive borders are reworked in ‘de-securitizing’ terms. The EU rejects Western European imperial ambitions in which the subjectivity of the Russian Other is overlooked. Instead, it expands the borders of the European continent by including Russia.

For its part, by subscribing to the ED, Russia understands itself as contributor to European energy security as well as an equal participant of ‘the Concert of Europe’. To paraphrase Browning, in the context of the relations between Western Europe and Russia, the ED represents a ‘move towards emancipation, egalitarianism and the emergence of a postmodern spatial politics of loosely defined networks rather than rigidly defined exclusionary state borders’.⁷⁷³ As a result, it can be initially concluded that the official language of the ED is mainly inspired by the logic of integration.

Yet, as the next sections will demonstrate, the EU and Russia construct their integration discourse differently.

⁷⁷¹ Commission of European Communities, The EU-Russia Energy Dialogue, 12th Progress Report, 2011, p. 1. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/international/russia/doc/20111201_eu_russia_report.pdf Accessed 20/01/2013

⁷⁷² Commission of the European Communities, *The EU-Russia Energy Dialogue. Joint Report. EU-Russia Energy Dialogue 2000-2010, Opportunity for Our Future Energy Partnership*, p. 2. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/international/events/doc/2010_11_22_eu_russia_anniversary_report_en.pdf Accessed 20/01/2013

⁷⁷³ See Browning, *The Region-Building Approach Revisited: The Continued Othering of Russia in Discourses of Region-Building in the European North*, p. 50

3 The European Approach to Energy Dialogue

As noted, an initial analysis shows that, from an EU perspective, the language used to describe the ED does not reflect the EU's narrative of the 'civilian empire', which aims to integrate the partners in its sphere of influence through legal approximation. In fact, in the wording of the agenda of the ED there is no clear mention of the principle of conditionality. The EC states that 'Russia and the European Union are natural partners in the energy sector'.⁷⁷⁴ Also, in describing the objective of the ED, it confirms that:

'the overall objective of the energy partnership is to enhance the energy security of the European continent by binding Russia and the EU into a closer relationship in which all issues of mutual concern in the energy sector can be addressed ... the strong mutual dependency and common interest in the energy sector is clearly a key area of EU-Russia relations'.⁷⁷⁵

However, the initial impression of the EU as aiming to set equal integration with Russia to enhance the energy security of Europe can be questioned. For example, the common aim of the establishment of a 'pan-European energy market'⁷⁷⁶ – one of the stated objectives of the ED – sits in contradiction with some EU references to the follower / teacher logic. In fact, despite the endorsed principle of equality, the EC Communication of 13 December 2004 on 'The EU-Russian Energy Dialogue between 2000 and 2004' reports:

[t]he energy dialogue (...) has opened the way for the convergence of strategies in the Russian and EU markets. The principles of the internal energy market, such as energy efficiency, reform of internal industrial structures, reform in the electricity sector and unbundling, could provide part of the reference framework for the restructuring of Russia's energy sector.⁷⁷⁷

⁷⁷⁴ European Commission Website, Energy from Abroad. EU-Russia energy relations. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/international/bilateral_cooperation/russia/russia_en.htm Accessed 12/07/2013

⁷⁷⁵ Commission of European Communities, *EU-Russia Energy Dialogue*, Press Release.

⁷⁷⁶ The emphasis on the pan-European energy market reflects not only the Commission's long-term perspective of the dialogue, but also the EU's vision on energy in Europe and ultimately the EU's project of 'Europe'

⁷⁷⁷ Commission of European Communities, *The Energy Dialogue between the European Union and the Russian Federation between 2000 and 2004*, p. 11

This demonstrates how, despite the endorsement of the egalitarian stance, references to Russian legal approximation with ‘the principles of the internal energy market’ still appear in the EU language on the ED.

This consequently paves the ground to argue that, the EU’s idea on energy in Europe is also tied to the RE energy paradigm (layer two), and ultimately linked to the traditional narrative of the EU as a eurocentric ‘civil empire’ (layer one).

The EU’s alleged detachment from its narrative of ‘civil empire’ is only apparent. The EU understands the concept of a ‘pan-European energy market’ as Russia’s adherence to the EU’s standards and norms. As a consequence, the EU’s ambition remains to establish a continent-wide energy market based on the EU’s (or similar to the EU’s) legislation, which would create adequate conditions for private investors. The language of the EC Communication defines the space for ‘acceptable’ behavior and makes the socialization of Russia possible into that space. At the same time, it recalls the repeated utterance of ‘making them like us’.

Essentially, some EU’s discursive practices denote a broadening of the ‘degree of Otherness’, and mark clear boundaries in the European space.

Fierke disputes that an equal dialogue can occur in a circumstance where the type of relation is that of ‘teacher / learner’.⁷⁷⁸

Conversely, by stating what is to be considered as acceptable ‘reference’ to implement a convergence strategy within the ED, the integration theme, as played out by the EU, stresses the goodness and the universality of the EU’s energy framework that should be applied also in Russia.

This seems to suggest that the possibility for Russia being treated as a subject is enhanced only if incorporation of the EU’s norms and values takes place. This reveals how the Western European representation of Russia as ‘learner’ still exists. In historical terms, this reading suggests that the EU imposes on itself the traditional mission to assimilate and civilize Russia into the Western political space through the extension of the EU’s *acquis communautaire* to the ‘East’. Russia needs to absorb the characterizing elements of Western democracies if it aims to be included in the Concert of Europe.

⁷⁷⁸ Fierke, *Dialogues of Manoeuvre and Entanglement: NATO, Russia, and the CEECs*, quoted by Browning, *The Region-Building Approach Revisited: The Continued Othering of Russia in Discourses of Region-Building in the European North*, p.54

It emerges that from the EU perspective, the meaning of integration is imbued by a considerable ambivalence. Further evidence demonstrates how, despite its apparent subjectivity, Russia still occupies a learner position in the EU debate on the ED: ‘The EU has developed broad legislative and regulatory basis for energy efficiency which we are keen to share with our Russian partners’.⁷⁷⁹

Here, the EU integration discourse serves to construct European identity as superior and benevolent civilization bloc, while it reinforces the Russian identity as a learner from Europe (layer one). Although described as a ‘partner’, the EU still treats Russia as a ‘policy recipient’.

The ED and its core values of integration and cooperation ultimately reveal a power relation proper of the traditional eurocentric/europeanising discourse with consequences for the political construction of ‘Europe’ as well as for the position of Russia in Europe. In fact, the EU advances the value of integration on a hierarchical basis and seeks to confer it a degree of ‘naturalness’.

The EU not only demonstrates its attitude to perpetuate the teacher / learner dichotomy but evidence can also be found to demonstrate how EU discourse contributes to the construction of Russia as a ‘threat’ through the theme of mistrust. On the one hand, the ED opens the way for cooperation and integration, thus, dismissing claims of a New Cold War contraposition. In fact the ED aims ‘to reinforce mutual confidence’⁷⁸⁰, and the EU confirms that ‘Russia will remain an important supplier to the EU for years to come’⁷⁸¹. On the other hand, the 2004 Commission Communication acknowledges that:

‘..the gas sector, on which the EU economy will become most dependent in the future, appears particularly vulnerable...It is therefore important that exporting countries do not distort the rules of the internal market by contracts which are inconsistent with Community law.’⁷⁸²

⁷⁷⁹ A., Piebalgs, EU – Russia Energy Cooperation, European Commission Press Release, SPEECH 07-654, Moscow, 23 October 2007. Available from: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-07-654_en.htm Accessed 22/08/2013

⁷⁸⁰ Commission of European Communities, 10th Anniversary of the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue. High level Conference, Brussels, 22 November 2010, p. 1. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/international/events/doc/2010_11_22_eu_russia_anniversary_agenda.pdf Accessed 20/07/2013

⁷⁸¹ Commission of European Communities, The European Union and Russia: Close Neighbors, Global Players, Strategic Partners, Brussels, 2007, p. 10. Available from: http://eeas.europa.eu/russia/docs/russia_brochure07_en.pdf Accessed 20/07/2013

⁷⁸² Commission of European Communities, *The Energy Dialogue between the European Union and the Russian Federation between 2000 and 2004*, p. 7

As Russia is the EU's major exporter, there is ground to argue that Russia is constructed as a source of anxiety and instability that comes from the EU's eastern borders, similar to the theme of 'Russia as a barbaric entity at the gate of Europe' (layer one). In another circumstance, the EC feels the need to specify that:

'it is vital for both the EU and Russia that companies such as Gazprom play a real, equal and active role in the EU's competitive energy markets. The presentation which took place at expert level just before the meeting confirm our commitment to transparency and openness, key for success in our dialogue.'

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The EC questions the integrity of Gazprom by casting doubts on its potential conduct. By doing so, it poses as a superior and fully-fledged player compliant with good and universal rules and it expects Russia to follow its example. It can be argued that, similar to its threatening image during the Cold War, Russia is represented as an alarming presence able to jeopardize the correct functioning of the EU's internal market. Here the condition is for Russia to adopt Western values and to be included into the 'we' of EU–Europe.

The impact of this interaction on Western European identity is twofold. On one side, it is the EU's mistrust towards Russia that reinforces the traditional Western European identity in terms of 'eurocentrism', 'europeanisation' and 'messianism'. On the other side, Russia's 'different' *modus operandi* has a constitutive power on the Western European identity that, as will be demonstrated, tends to be portrayed not only as universal but also as benevolent.

The existing conventional constructivist and discourse-based literatures on the ED⁷⁸⁴, overlook such a mutual constitutive dynamic because they merely examine the differences in policy interests and discourses between the two opposed actors, EU and

⁷⁸³ Piebalgs, *EU – Russia Energy Cooperation*, European Commission Press Release

⁷⁸⁴ For conventional constructivist accounts see for example: Romanova, *The Russian Perspective on the Energy Dialogue*; Hadfield, *EU-Russia Energy Relations: Aggregation and Aggravation*. See also Helm, *The Russian Dimension and Europe's External Energy Policy*

See also V., Milov, *The EU Russia Energy Dialogue: Competition versus Monopolies*, Paris: IFRI, 2006.

For discourse-based accounts see for example, Aalto in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe's Future Energy Security*; Morozov in Aalto *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe's Future Energy Security*; Tichy and Kratochvil, *EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations*

Russia, without grasping the constitutive implication of this interaction. For example, Hadfield,⁷⁸⁵ by examining a number of documents pertaining to the ED, only concludes that the two actors hold dissimilar understandings of energy security.

The idea that Western Europe has a universal civilizing mission in Russia reflects a historical parallel that validates a particular construction of the ‘West’ as possessing ultimate knowledge as well as the universal prescriptions for modernization. As a consequence, Russia is perceived not only as barbarian and backward vis a vis the West/Western Europe, but also as a country in need of modernization.

From this perspective, the EC’s dedication to promote the ‘good’ European practices of energy efficiency and energy savings in Russia as a way to guarantee availability of energy resources for future supply to the EU, is inscribed in a representation of Russia as a country in transition towards modernization. As the above mentioned EC Communication reports:

‘[t]he modernisation of the Russian economy, support to its high rate of growth (around 7% p.a.) makes it all the more essential that Russian industry adopts efficient energy practices in order to increase capacities for export, including towards the EU’.⁷⁸⁶

The same Communication reports that:

‘Consideration should be given to involvement of the Russian electricity supply industry in the Community electricity market, given forecasts of European electricity needs. Thus the synchronous interconnection of the Russian electricity network with the EU continental network was entered on the list of “common interest” projects agreed on at the EU-Russia summit of October 2001. To achieve this, many related issues will need to be resolved, notably those relating to the respect of environmental standards, nuclear safety in Russia and reciprocal access to electricity markets with due respect to relevant international obligations incumbent on each party’.⁷⁸⁷

⁷⁸⁵ Hadfield, *EU-Russia Energy Relations: Aggregation and Aggravation*

⁷⁸⁶ Commission of European Communities, *The Energy Dialogue between the European Union and the Russian Federation between 2000 and 2004*, p. 11

⁷⁸⁷ Commission of European Communities, *Ibidem*

Such affirmations support the construction of the EU's identity as guardian and responsible for the energy security in Europe (ethical identity) and reveals a unilateral approach to energy relations between the EU and Russia based on the assumption that Russia should approximate to the EU standards, assimilate its internal priorities and ultimately serve its energy needs.⁷⁸⁸ The uneven understanding of the relationship with Russia is also evident from the wording. In fact, by focusing on the '...synchronous interconnection of the Russian electricity network in the EU continental network...' as an issue to consider, the EU projects itself as a term of reference. On one side, the constitutive power of the Russian Other is here evident in that the EU reinforces its own eurocentric identity. On the other side, the integrationist vocation of the EU towards the creation of a Common European Home implies a construction of Russia as a country that needs modernization in order to be accepted. In doing so, the EU constructs both its temporal identity as a 'developed' actor as well as Russian identity as 'developing' Other. At the same time, the Russian-Other supports the construction of the EU-Self and its policy principles as more advanced.

In addition, the EU represents Russia as an external object of the ED rather than an equal subject within an equal framework. The EU's urgency to include Russia in the Concert characterizes the ED as a policy 'on' Russia rather than a policy that sets a framework for equal relationship 'with' Russia. A consequence of such a position is that the EU projects itself as the privileged 'agenda-setter' entitled to govern energy in Europe by defining energy priorities and objectives (e.g. energy efficiency, energy saving, environmental standards, nuclear safety). Given that the agenda of the ED is mainly advancing the EU's own interests, it is clear that the EU fails to involve Russia in the formulation of common energy cooperation and equalitarian status.⁷⁸⁹ As such, an eventual lack of Russia's commitment to follow the objectives indicated by the EU means Russia's failure to achieve equal subjectivity with the EU and her relegation to the outside.

In other words, if Russia rejects these energy objectives and standards defined by the EU, it would be constructed as an 'opponent' to the peace project, and as posing a threat to the energy security of Europe. In doing so – similar to the Western European treatment of the new Russian Federation in the period following the collapse of the

⁷⁸⁸ Kratochvíl, Tichý, *EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations*, p. 397

⁷⁸⁹ Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, p. 18

USSR during which economic dependence and unequal exchange were re-established – the EU keeps treating Russia as a ‘learner’ and employing an implicit conditionality. In particular, the imposition of the EU energy agenda in the ED, reiterates the vision of Russia as a backward country⁷⁹⁰:

‘The investment situation in the Russian Federation was another important topic of discussion within the Dialogue. The EU side underlined the need to proceed with market reforms, the application of market-based pricing and to simplify administrative and licensing procedures.’⁷⁹¹

The teacher-learner understanding of the EU’s relations with Russia can also be grasped in the words of the former Energy Commissioner Piebalgs who explicitly considered that: ‘Russia needs to ensure a secure and attractive investment climate which reduces, as far as possible, the level of non-commercial risk’.⁷⁹² Similarly, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the ED, the Joint Report specifies that:

‘[s]ince the start of the energy dialogue with Russia, the Commission has underlined the importance which it attaches to commitments under the Kyoto Protocol on climate change. In the framework of the dialogue, the Commission has insisted on raising the question of Russian ratification of the Protocol, without which the Protocol could not come into force’.⁷⁹³

By referring to the missed ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, the EU constructs Russia as an ‘obstacle’ that undermines international progress as well as an actor unwilling to comply with ‘good’ regulation. As such, the EU still fails to embark on an equal ‘subject-subject’ avenue of cooperation. Rather, it sets a ‘subject-object’ relation, in

⁷⁹⁰ J., Böröcz, and M., Kovács, eds., *Empires New Clothes: Unveiling EU Enlargement*, Telford (UK): Central Europe Review, 2001, pp. 34-35. Available from: <http://aei.pitt.edu/144/1/Empire.pdf> Accessed: 5/5/2013

⁷⁹¹ The EU-Russia Energy Dialogue, *Joint Report EU-Russia Energy Dialogue 2000-2010: Opportunities for our future Energy Partnership*, p.7

⁷⁹² Piebalgs, *EU – Russia Energy Cooperation*, European Commission Press Release

See also OECD Investment Policy Review of the Russian Federation: Russia’s Energy Investment Policy, Paris: OECD, 2008, p.23

⁷⁹³ Commission of European Communities, *The Energy Dialogue between the European Union and the Russian Federation between 2000 and 2004*, p.7

which Russia is cast in the passive role of policy-taker.⁷⁹⁴ Also, by representing Russia as an obstacle, the EU rejects the Russian challenge to the EU hegemonic discourse. Such a discursive practice contributes to unify the hegemonic discourse and allows, at the same time, the description of a threatening outside that prevents the closure of the hegemonic and universal discourse itself.⁷⁹⁵

Furthermore, it can be argued how the examples of technical assistance projects have much wider political meanings compared to what usually is made apparent and, to some extent, are framed by identity politics. In fact, perceptions and recognition of political difference prevail over technical issues of cooperation.⁷⁹⁶

On one side, the invitation to participate in these projects confirms how the EU still holds an image of Russia as a ‘recipient’ and as a country in need of assistance. On the other side, the EU’s offer to assist its counterpart contributes to the construction of the identity of the EU as a ‘benevolent’ and ‘charitable’ actor. For example, with reference to the EU-funded TACIS programme – which aimed to provide technical assistance, including the implementation of the energy issues of the Kyoto protocol – the EU stresses that:

‘The Russian Federation is a key supplier to the EU nuclear industry...Through the TACIS programme, the EU supported a large number of support activities and technical assistance to nuclear safety projects in the Russian Federation’.⁷⁹⁷

Despite the benevolent purpose, by emphasizing its support to projects in Russia, the EU speaks the language of hierarchy, re-inscribing once again the relationship with Russia within the historical teacher / learner dichotomy.

By implementing projects for the nuclear safety of Russian Federation, the EU is projecting itself as benevolent leader that shows the good energy practices to his follower. Here, the issue concerns the lack of intersubjectivity in the cooperation between the EU and Russia with the latter being denied the status of political subject

⁷⁹⁴ S., Prozorov, *Border Regions and the Politics of EU-Russian Relations: The Role of the EU in Tempering and Producing Border Conflicts. Working Paper Series in EU Border*, 2004. Quoted in Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, p.23

⁷⁹⁵ Dowding, *Encyclopedia of Power*, p.195

⁷⁹⁶ See Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, pp.2-3

⁷⁹⁷ Commission of European Communities, *Joint Report. EU-Russia Energy Dialogue 2000-2010. Opportunities for our Future Energy Partnership.*, p. 9

with its own interests. Behind the benevolent intention to develop regional cooperation on energy, the EU discourse tends to portray Russia as a country unready to contribute to the progress of the European energy agenda and thus, still in need of assistance. Given that Russia is still portrayed as a learner, its integration into Europe can only be assisted.⁷⁹⁸

Overall, through technical assistance projects, the EU continues to construct Russia as the object whose subjectivity is denied in favour of its continued 'backward' status in Western discourse.

Once again, Russia contributes to the construction of the EU's identity as 'benevolent'.⁷⁹⁹ In short, through its assistance the EU also tries to reject the image of the West as a self-interested entity. Rather, as an expression of the Western civilization, the EU reinforces its self-representation as a charitable actor willing to spread its universally valid principles to the backward 'East'. The Eurocentric tradition here emerges in the Self's attribution of the moral 'obligation' or 'unique' privilege to intercede in the social development of Russia by assisting it in finding the true course to social and economic progress.⁸⁰⁰

4 Summary

From a first reading, the European understanding of the ED tends to establish a relationship between partners through a dialogue between equals. It also tends to 'de-securitize' the whole European discourse on energy security and enlarge the borders of Europe. The ED offers ground to 'desacralize' the Western image of Russia as a liminar case and unstable Other of the West that has been played out for centuries. By treating Russia as an equal partner the ED provides the opportunity to integrate Russia into Europe. Moreover, the 'de-securitisation' of energy is seen as a first step in the liberation of 'Europe' from the politics of modernity with its focus on state sovereignty and territorial security. Conversely, the ED seems to set European energy security on

⁷⁹⁸ Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, p. 19

⁷⁹⁹ Browning, *The Region-Building Approach Revisited: The Continued Othering of Russia in Discourses of Region-Building in the European North*, p.48

⁸⁰⁰ J., Weldes, *Going Cultural: Star Trek, State Action and Popular Culture*, *Millennium*, Vol. 28, No. 1, 1999, p.131

the innovative (post-modern) path in which issues of general interest (e.g. energy efficiency, environmental concerns) replace traditional state concerns related to energy supply (e.g. reliability, diversification).

However, despite its stated goal of integration between equals, the EU proved to define integration in hierarchical terms. As such, the EU's approach to the ED confirms the Western European legacy that constitutes the EU as a civilisational empire. Relations with Russia are ultimately understood in unequal terms; the possibility for a genuine dialogue seems compromised as Russia keeps occupying a learner (object) position in the EU's discourse. Overall, such a negative position of Russia is at odds with the wording of the ED that establishes an equal status of the two partners in the energy governance of Europe. Ultimately the EU re-inscribes the boundaries of 'Europe' in exclusionary terms.⁸⁰¹

This offers Russia the option, either of being imperialized within the EU's political space⁸⁰², or, as it will be demonstrated below, of insisting on claims for a dialogue that promotes equality as *conditio sine qua non*.

Rationalist theories would explain the tension as caused by clashing interests, conventional constructivists by clashing identities, instead existing discourse-based accounts analyze the construction of competing energy paradigms or how the different approaches of the EU and Russia towards the ED are indicative of a deeper discursive or power contest that eventually translate into a struggle for 'Europe'.⁸⁰³ The proposed reading goes beyond these discourse-based accounts because it introduces the 'degree of Otherness' as the factor that explains how actors – through their discursive practices played out in the context of the ED – move from a condition of mutual positive representations and commonness to a scenario of negative Otherness. This has implications on the mutual construction of actors' identity in spatial, temporal and ethical terms.

In addition, the proposed approach stresses how the discursive practices played out in the context of the ED (layer three) are a reflection of actors' energy paradigms (layer two) and ultimately of historical representation of Self in relation to the Other (layer one).

⁸⁰¹ Browning, *The Region-Building Approach Revisited: The Continued Othering of Russia in Discourses of Region-Building in the European North*, p. 48

⁸⁰² Browning, *Ibidem*

⁸⁰³ See for example Tichy and Kratochvil, *EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations*; Morozov in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe's Future Energy Security*

5 The Russian Approach

The employment of discursive practices by the EC, showing an understanding of 'integration' in terms of a civilizing mission, is problematic for Russia and it reignites the internal debates on Russian identity, which either constructs itself as a member of Western civilization, or as the 'Other' of Europe.⁸⁰⁴

In its wording, the ED represents an opportunity for Russia to participate in Western European society that – according to nineteenth century thinking – is a Concert of Great Powers with smaller powers relegated to the margins. From this perspective, it can be said that Russia initially accepted the ED with the EU as it adheres to the idea that salient issues – such as energy – have to be discussed among equal Great Powers.⁸⁰⁵

A certain urgency to be recognized as belonging to the European society can also be noticed in that: 'Gazprom is ready to provide as much gas as Europe wishes'⁸⁰⁶ on condition that 'we [EU and Russia] heed mutual interests'.⁸⁰⁷ Claims for a balanced energy relationship with other Great Powers, also reflects Putin's understanding of international politics and Russia's position in it. In particular, the ambivalence of Putin's discourse is evident as he promotes Russia's identification with Europe – through the endorsement of the ED – on condition that it is cooperation between formal equals. As a result, the ED represents a tangible tool for maintaining the prospect of a Concert of Europe composed of superpowers, which includes Russia. Here, it can be noted how Russia constructs its 'European' identity in spatial terms since 'Europe' is understood as a united continent with no confrontational boundaries among superpowers.

In this respect, as a dialogue based on an equal partnership, Russia validates the ED and

⁸⁰⁴ Browning, *The Region-Building Approach Revisited: The Continued Othering of Russia in Discourses of Region-Building in the European North*, p. 65

See disputes between westernisers and slavophiles in the nineteenth century.

⁸⁰⁵ P., Aalto, Russia's Quest for International Society and the Prospects for Regional-Level International Societies, *International Relations*, Vol. 21, No. 4, 2007, p. 464

⁸⁰⁶ Alexander Medvedev made this statement at the Eighth International Conference 'Energy Dialogue: EU-Russia. Gas Aspects'. Quoted by M., Koleva, *Russia Ready to Provide As Much Gas As Europe Wishes*, Europost, Brussels, 31 May 2013. Available from: <http://www.europost.bg/article?id=7745> Accessed 20/08/2013

⁸⁰⁷ The Voice of Russia, *Energy Dialogue will be Successful if Russia and EU Heed Mutual Interests – Putin*, 4 June 2013. Available from: http://voiceofrussia.com/news/2013_06_04/Energy-dialogue-will-be-successful-if-Russia-and-EU-heed-mutual-interests-Putin-2903/ Accessed 20/10/2013

identifies itself with ‘Europe’ and with the principles of cooperation. According to a previous Russian energy Minister, Shmatko: ‘Stable, reliable and predictable relations between Russia and the EU based on mutual trust in the field of energy constitute the most important conditions for providing energy security for Europe’.⁸⁰⁸ Overall, such a Russian approach focused on equality reflects Russia’s political thinking characterized by a great emphasis on the notion of mutual respect of sovereignty, which represents the cornerstone of the Westphalian, or pluralist international society. In fact, the attempt to promote cooperation through the scheme of Great Power management, to ensure balance of power, is a familiar trait of a number of Russian historical traditions such as Tsarist and Soviet Russia. More specifically, the understanding of international society as a concert headed by Great Powers acting in a multilateral and exclusive forum is also present in the historical narratives of Eurasianism and pragmatic statism (see chapter 3). Answering a question during a press conference, Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov said:

‘We want that this (energy) dialogue would be based on the principles which were earlier agreed, primarily which were agreed at the G8 Summit in St. Petersburg, which rest on a mutual consideration of interests, a balance of interests of producer countries, consumer countries and transiter countries. We continue to believe that these principles are absolutely essential for tackling all the questions that arise in this sector’.⁸⁰⁹

The self-understanding of ‘Russia Great Power’, that deals with other Great Powers in a multipolar structure, downplays claims of the competing historical tradition – dominant during the Petrin period and later under Gorbachev – that describes Russia as constantly trying to catch up with the more developed Western European powers.⁸¹⁰ Russia’s claim for equality also contributes to the construction of its temporal identity as a country with a level of development comparable to Western Europe. Consequently the EU’s scheme of ‘developed vs developing’ is rejected. On the contrary, the

⁸⁰⁸ Commission of European Communities, *The First Ten Years*, p. 30

⁸⁰⁹ The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation, Transcript of Remarks and Response to Media Questions by Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov at Joint Press Conference with Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Belgium Karel de Gucht, , Moscow, 3 September 2008. Available from: http://www.mid.ru/bdomp/brp_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b43256999005bcbb3/8bf1a2f304c392cac3257523003f9dfd!OpenDocument Accessed 10/11/2013

⁸¹⁰ Aalto, *Russia’s Quest for International Society and the Prospects for Regional-Level International Societies*, pp. 462-463

emphasis on the balanced nature of the ED suggests that integration can only occur if partners have equal say in the interaction.

Similar to the EU, from an analysis of the Russian official documents and speeches available in English, integration represents the main concern for Russia, which has proved to hold a different understanding of the concept of energy integration compared to the EU. As noted, the latter has defined the integration process in the sense of Russia looking at the EU energy standards as terms of reference. By contrast, Russia emphasizes the principles of a mutually beneficial and symmetric cooperation and integration, where Russia would be an equal partner of the EU. To quote Minister Shmatko: ‘what is important for us is dialogue, not a diktat’.⁸¹¹

From a Russian perspective, the ED re-proposes a tension in which Russia claims integration with the EU and it tries, at the same time, to erase the long-standing image of Russia’s ‘ambiguity’ vis a vis Western Europe. Russia is both a ‘normal state’ and a ‘Great Power’. As Secieriu contends, the tension is between an aspiration for integration in the international community – that is recognition of ‘normalness’ – and the ambitions of Great Power.⁸¹² It follows that Russia problematizes the EU’s hierarchical inclusion. This explains the rejection of asymmetric integration and acceptance of claims that would secure symmetric inter-subjectivity between the EU and Russia. As Putin, put it:

‘Today our energy dialogue is getting deeper both on a bilateral level and within the Russia-EU format. But I shall say directly that such cooperation can only exist on an equal rights and mutually advantageous basis. And if people want us to create the conditions that will allow foreign firms access to the Russian market then it is also our right to expect a non-discriminatory attitude from the governments of interested states when Russian companies plan to enter European markets’.⁸¹³

⁸¹¹ See S., Shmatko, *My Sokhranyaem Kontrol*. Die Welt, 23 July 2009, quoted in Kratochvíl, and Tichý, *EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations*, p. 400

⁸¹² Secieriu, *Russia's Quest for Strategic Identity*, p.9 quoted by Browning, *The Region-Building Approach Revisited: The Continued Othering of Russia in Discourses of Region-Building in the European North*, p.10

⁸¹³ President of Russia Federation, Opening Address at the Meeting with Representatives from the Bavaria Business Community, 11 October 2006. Available from: http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2006/10/11/2230_type82914type84779_112436.shtml
Accessed 20/10/2013

Here, it can be noted how Putin emphasizes the concept of Russia's recognition as a 'sovereign equal' to the EU. In other words, he pushes for the 'transition' from a status of 'apprentice'/ 'learner' to the recognition of Russia's sovereign subjectivity that entitles Russia to act as the counterpart of the EU in the ED.

As Prozorov suggests, Russia's interaction with the EU in the context of the ED can ultimately be read through the categories of identity recognition rather than being a matter of interest divergence⁸¹⁴, as a rationalist account would argue. However, Prozorov's frame fails to explain how such an identity recognition game is not only historically grounded but also based on mutual representations. In fact, thanks to the various historical representations of the Self in relation to the Other, it is possible to build a representational continuum (degree of Otherness) that goes from sameness/partnership to inequality/confrontation. Once this continuum is built, it is possible to decipher – from a Self's perspective – the terms of identity recognition (partnership, equality) or a lack of it (mistrust, inferiority) vis a vis Other's identity. For instance, coming back to the above-mentioned statement by Putin, it can be noted how, given his adherence to the historical narrative tradition promoting egalitarian relations with the West, he expresses a view positioned on the sameness side of the representational continuum. This contributes to explain his claim for equal identity recognition with the EU in the context of the ED.

In historical perspective, the claim for equality has relevant implications for relations with the 'West'. In the history of Russian thought, equality belongs to the specific narrative field of 'Great Power Russia', and implies the typical realist concern of preserving 'national interests'. Part of this narrative tradition viewed the 'West' as an entity undermining Russian national interests as well as Russia's status as Great Power. It emerges that adherence to the Great Power tradition suggests also a negative reading of the West, described through the Eurasian themes of 'threat' and 'mistrust'. As the Third Progress Report specifies:

'Russia asks for an indication that the EU's policy of opening up the electricity and natural gas markets to competition is not being conceived in a way that

⁸¹⁴ Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, p. 24

would limit the presence of Russian supplies in the EU.’⁸¹⁵

By negatively depicting certain European energy objectives – e.g. opening up of gas and electricity markets to competition – which derive from specific EU culture and values and by acknowledging mistrust towards the EU, Russia is posing a civilization challenge. In particular, some European energy objectives sound unfamiliar to the Russian tradition of energy governance and are deemed as potentially detrimental to Russian interests.

As such, the perceived mistrust contributes to constructing Western Europe as plotting against Russian interest. Russia’s mistrust towards Western Europeans can be further demonstrated. As Shmatko himself noted on the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the ED: ‘Unfortunately a note of mistrust remains in the energy field between Russian and European partners. A consequence of it is the actively pursued policy of diversification’.⁸¹⁶

Such a sense of mistrust ultimately reveals a recognition problem for Russia. For its part, Russia feels that Western Europe is denying its political subjectivity. As Putin noted: ‘We always say ... we want to operate on the basis of a clear, market relationship... without actually going into detail about which rules Russia was prepared to commit itself to’.⁸¹⁷

Overall, the anti-Western element of the Eurasianist narrative is used to describe the West as a threat to Russia. By contrast, the pro-Western Russian tradition – that accepts the position as ‘student of the West’ – is discarded. In other words, the appearance of Eurasian narratives serves to elicit the closure of the Russian pro-Western narrative – initially evident in the ED – in which the West is depicted as the natural partner for cooperation. The Eurasian reading also suggests that the positive views of itself that the West has tried to promote was false. The West is not sincere about its relationship with Russia given that it questions Russia’s honesty. Western ‘falsity’ offers an opportunity for Russia to reiterate and construct its ethical conduct. As Putin clarified: ‘I would like to repeat what I told my colleagues today: Russia is not behaving in a selfish way and

⁸¹⁵ President of Russian Federation, EU–Russia Energy Dialogue, Third Progress Report, 11 November 2002. Available from: <http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/events/articles/2002/11/148445/148441.shtml> Accessed 20/10/2013

⁸¹⁶ Commission of European Communities, *The First Ten Years*, p. 31

⁸¹⁷ Spiegel Online International, *Putin-Merkel Summit: Germany and Russia Try to Smooth Over Energy Tensions*, 22 January 2007. Available from: <http://www.spiegel.de/international/putin-merkel-summit-germany-and-russia-try-to-smooth-over-energy-tensions-a-461249.html> Accessed 20/06/2013

has always been a highly reliable partner.⁸¹⁸ As a result, Eurasianism resurrects the West from the positive position in which it was initially inscribed while Russia is 'liberated' from the Western label as an untrustworthy partner. Russia's concerns over the reliability of the European energy market are no longer unfounded but legitimate.

Of relevant importance in this anti-Western narrative is the appropriation of a specific language (e.g. mistrust, reliable partner, 'Russia is not selfish') that describe new conflictual dispositions and negative constructions of the West.⁸¹⁹ In the Eurasianist discourse, Russia's mission of promoting a genuine and non-US biased multiculturalism which is by counterbalancing 'the monocentrism rooted in the power of the West' is reinforced.⁸²⁰ This, in turn, paves the ground for advancing realist concerns of preserving and promoting 'power balance', 'national interests', 'national security' and 'national sovereignty'.⁸²¹

In this context, Russia's intention to diversify its oil exports – as specified in the Russian 2030 Energy Strategy⁸²² - can also be read through the multipolar ambition proper of the Eurasian tradition. As specified, the share of Russian exports to the Asian countries 'would grow from 6% to 22-25% in 2030. Russian policy aims at the gradual reduction of oil supply to the European market while significantly increasing exports eastwards'.⁸²³ Russia problematizes the hierarchical integration of the EU's discourse because the latter imposes a subject-object relationship. The hierarchical inclusion of the EU challenges the logic of sovereignty and 'Great Power Russia' and generates in Russia a narrative of exclusion from Europe and a re-orientation towards the 'East'.

The Russian discourse therefore moves, from the initial endorsement of integration, to

⁸¹⁸ President of Russia Federation, Statement and Answers to Questions Following the Russia-EU Summit, 3 October 2001. Available from: http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2001/10/03/0001_type82914type82915_137325.shtml Accessed 20/10/2013

⁸¹⁹ C.S. Browning, 'Coming Home or Moving Home? Westernising Narrative in Finnish Foreign Policy and the Reinterpretation of the Past Identity', *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 37, No.1, March 2002, p.52

⁸²⁰ See note 64 in H., Patomäki and Pursiainen, 'Western Models and the Russian Idea: Beyond Inside/Outside in Discourses on Civil Society', *Journal of International Studies – Millennium*, Vol. 28, No.1 1999, p.71

⁸²¹ Browning, *The Region-Building Approach Revisited: The Continued Othering of Russia in Discourses of Region-Building in the European North*, p. 62

⁸²² The Roadmap is considered as part of the debate on the ED given that it is reported that 'the Roadmap should be regarded as a common reference in the context of the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue. The actions proposed by the Roadmap should be monitored and be revised within the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue'. See Commission of European Communities, Roadmap. EU-Russia Energy Cooperation until 2050, March 2013, p. 2. Available from :

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/international/russia/doc/2013_03_eu_russia_roadmap_2050_signed.pdf
Accessed 20/09/2013

⁸²³ Commission of European Communities, *Roadmap. EU-Russia Energy Cooperation until 2050*, p.17

the disillusioned abandonment of the integrationist concept and the consequent construction of the 'East' as a legitimate entity for a new energy dialogue.⁸²⁴

Ultimately, to paraphrase Prozorov, Russia's approach to the ED connects with the Russian demand for a 'strategic intersubjectivity'. Russia desires a 'subject-subject' relationship between equal policy-makers rather than a 'subject-object' relationship.⁸²⁵

Moreover, to complement Prozorov's reading, the proposed analysis of the ED sheds light on the constitutive power of the outsider. In fact, the interaction with the EU contributes to Russia's shift towards the East and, thus, it constructs Russian identity as 'Eastern' and Eurasian.

From this perspective, EU's hierarchical attitude holds here a constitutive power as it contributes to a re-definition of Russia's identity in Eurasian terms. In fact, the perception of a lack of recognition as an actor entitled to have a say, substantiates a Russian discourse of self-exclusion from European integration rooted in the reaffirmation of sovereignty⁸²⁶ through the construction of an alternative Russian Europe:

'...it is very important to have a solid regulatory framework. What kind of framework? It can either be our idea on energy dialogue, based on the corresponding principles of energy cooperation, or – as I have said many times to my colleagues – we are ready to work on the basis of the Energy Charter, but not on the basis of its current version. Instead, we are willing to work under its new version, which has been supplemented and amended, taking into account Russia's suggestions...So if we can agree on this kind of regulatory framework, then I think everything will be done to give gas supplies operations a good legislative format'.⁸²⁷

Here, it can also be seen how the contest for 'Europe' occurs in that Russia aims to challenge the role of the EU as the embodiment of the 'true' Europe that leads the

⁸²⁴ Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, p. 36

⁸²⁵ Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, p.23

⁸²⁶ Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*

⁸²⁷ President of Russia, *Press Statements Following EU-Russia Summit*, 7 December 2010. Available from: <http://eng.kremlin.ru/transcripts/1435> Accessed 20/12/2013

energy agenda of the continent. As a consequence, Russian discourse on the ED provides reason to remind us that Russian identity has not always been Western and that there is a Russian alternative to the ‘Western’ course for Europe.

As such, through the ED, the competing discourse of a Russian Europe challenges the hegemonic discourse of the EU-Europe. The political contestation between the Self and Other is ultimately a contestation for power and hegemony and stems from the awareness that even the dominant discourse is vulnerable and incomplete. This opens the possibility for a competing Russian project.

Elements of the above-mentioned cultural clash – as in the Eurasian tradition – (layer one) contribute to understand, for example, actors’ different interests and paradigms of energy security (layer two). As Romanova put it, EU and Russia ‘have a mutual interest in the dialogue, but each pursues its own agenda’.⁸²⁸ Analogous to the different understanding of diversification (see chapter 5), the term ‘reciprocity’ – found in the EU and Russian discourse and used to foster mutual cooperation in the ED – discloses in reality a divergent understanding of the term that draws from the two competing energy security paradigms – MI and RE. As Barysch reports, from an EU perspective reciprocity entails a ‘mutually agreed regulatory framework promoting mutual investment’, and it is designed to serve the objective of market opening and integration; Russia instead interprets it as an exchange of assets of comparable value or benefit, and as a principle that should serve the objective of acquiring profitable downstream assets in European markets.⁸²⁹ Here it emerges how, a conflict on a technical issue that expresses different understandings of energy governance (layer two) ultimately discloses a broader cultural conflict.

6 Overview

This last section demonstrates how a discursive tension between the demand for greater

⁸²⁸ T., Romanova, (2008b), Energy Dialogue, from Strategic Partnership to the Regional Level of the Northern Dimension, in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe’s Future Energy Security*, p. 76

⁸²⁹ K., Barysch, *Policy Brief: Russia, Realism and EU Unity*, London, Centre for European Reform, 2007, p. 5

See also A., Belyi, Reciprocity as a Factor of the Energy Investment Regimes in the EU-Russia Energy Relations, *Journal of World Energy Law & Business*, Vol.2, No.2, 2009, p.128

inclusion as a 'Great Power' (the 'integrationist' narrative) and the valorization of self-exclusion (Russian 'sovereign' narrative) operates within the Russian discourse.⁸³⁰ The EU's approach that – despite claims of cooperation and equal integration – has still proved to treat Russia as an external object rather than an equal subject, contributes to shape such a conflict. As a consequence, Russia seeks to deal with the EU's approach either by insisting on the need for more equitable inclusion or through attempts to evade hierarchical subjection and exit the space of 'inclusion' by looking eastwards.

As such, the unjust hierarchical 'inclusion' of the EU tends to spill over into the domain of identity politics, in which the asymmetry in question is generative of ethical resentment.⁸³¹ In other words, it is precisely the status of object in logic of hierarchical inclusion that generates the assertive discourse of Russia's self-exclusion.⁸³² This, in turn, explains the resurrection of the Eurasian identity with its great emphasis on equality, mistrust towards the West and multipolarism.

From this perspective, Russia's reaffirmation of sovereignty logically limits the success of a top-level dialogue – as it was initially designed – and generates a mutual delimitation of the two parties as sovereign entities.

All in all, the crucial grievance that triggers the discursive tension is precisely the perception of the absence of authentic intersubjectivity. EU hierarchical inclusion turns out to be the key 'point of diffraction' of the political discourse on Russia's relations with the European continent. This is because the concept of hierarchical inclusion challenges the principle of sovereignty which is a key element of Russian historical tradition.

By applying Prozorov's interpretation to the case of the ED, what emerges is a relationship in which 'while the subject enfolded in the hierarchical structure is by definition deprived of its sovereignty (Russia), the subject (EU) who constitutes the hierarchy in question is endowed with sovereignty in the very act of this constitution'.⁸³³

While this intuition might be accurate, Prozorov fails to stress how this is a reflection of

⁸³⁰ Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, p. 39

⁸³¹ Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, p. 24

⁸³² Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, p. 38

⁸³³ Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, p. 40

the historical encounters of the actors. From this perspective, the proposed analysis explains Prozorov's intuition through historical narratives and representations.

As such, the EU / Western Europe proves to rest on the principles of the historical eurocentric narrative that constructs non-Western cultures as Others to convert. By doing so, EU/Western Europe draws boundaries and constructs Otherness. Russia, for its part, responds by reaffirming its sovereignty and resuscitating its Eurasian identity.

7 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to demonstrate how the ED epitomizes a struggle for hegemony at the level of discourse and to demonstrate how the language of Othering can challenge the established discourse of cooperation. The mutual perception of mistrust and the contestation on 'Europe' (EU-Europe vs Russia-Europe) are indicative of a discursive structure framed also in antagonistic terms. This presupposes the presence of a 'negative outside' perceived on both sides. As a result, the stability of the hegemonic discourse that actors seem to pursue (e.g. cooperation between two equal partners) is undermined.

In particular, this chapter pointed out the relevant consequences and meaning that can be grasped in the complex energy relations between the EU and Russia. In setting its energy relations with Russia, the EU has acted consistently within the Eurocentric narrative of 'EU civilian empire'. The case of the ED shows how this imperial ambition occurs despite egalitarian language.

Through the ED, the ultimate objective of the EU is to include Russia in a European political space in which the EU can retain the primary role of agenda setter for energy policy in Europe. Russia is invited to adhere to the EU's political project. In short, the EU's debate on the ED epitomizes how the EU aspires to transform Russia, offering her integration in the European political space.

This, in turn, leads to the EU's 'Othering' of Russia. In other words, acting along the imperial logic, the EU not only fails to recognize Russian European subjectivity but it also represents itself as the embodiment of the 'true' Europe opposed to Russia's 'false' project. In the light of this 'Othering' process, it is therefore important to underline how, in the EU's discursive practices, Russia continues to occupy a negative position.

The alleged new approach of the EU to the ED echoed a Western European legacy that sees the EU as the embodiment of 'Europe'. In other words, in the EU's discourse on ED, Russia remains construed as the object to be acted upon, the 'Other' different from Europe. Hence, Russia's subjectivity is denied in favour of its continued negative position in Western discourses. This, in turn, represents a catalyst for constructions of the Western (EU) identity as 'charitable' and 'benevolent'.⁸³⁴ Such a negative location of Russia undermines the efforts to move towards the EU's initial objective of a more open, equal and de-securitised relationship with Russia. It also re-establishes the boundaries of 'Europe' in hierarchical and exclusionary terms. The EU's approach offers Russia the option, either of being imperialised or alternatively of being marginalised on the periphery of Europe.⁸³⁵

As Morozov contends, faced with the adamant position of the EU bureaucracy and with the increasing scarcity of energy resources, Russia could consider redirecting a substantial fraction of its energy to non-Western European countries (e.g. China, India), rather than to private western investors.⁸³⁶ This is not only due to a rational calculus. Rather, it is also a question of identities interaction and mutual representation: Eurasianist ideology is still fashionable among the Russian leadership, and therefore western ownership and the EU's project on Europe are perceived as a potential threat to Russia's economic security. Even if President Putin does not fully adhere to the slavophile/Eurasianist, legacy, his policy is still clearly stimulated by the idea of a balance between Europe and Asia.⁸³⁷ In particular, evidence of a shift eastward of Russian foreign policy can be easily found. In February 2012 Putin published an article entitled 'Russia and the Changing World' in which he referred to Russia as an 'inalienable and organic' part of European civilisation, adding, however, that the Asia-Pacific represents the new driver of globalisation. In particular, he portrayed Russia and China as natural partners. In his view, the two countries embarked on an openly pragmatic relationship permeated by extraordinary levels of trust⁸³⁸. The Ukrainian crisis in 2014 has accelerated Russia's eastward turn. The Western sanctions against

⁸³⁴ Browning, *The Region-Building Approach Revisited: The Continued Othering of Russia in Discourses of Region-Building in the European North*

⁸³⁵ Browning, *The Region-Building Approach Revisited: The Continued Othering of Russia in Discourses of Region-Building in the European North*

⁸³⁶ Morozov, in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe's Future Energy Security*, p.50

⁸³⁷ Browning, *Reassessing Putin's project: reflections on IR theory and the West*, pp.4-19

⁸³⁸ V. Putin, *Vladimir Putin on foreign policy: Russia and the changing world*, Valdai Club, 27 February 2012. Available from: <http://valdaiclub.com/politics/39300.html> Accessed 27/09/2014

Russia have fuelled the image of the West acting to isolate Russia in international arena. As a reaction, Moscow has reiterated its strategy to look East for new business, energy deals, military contracts and political alliances.⁸³⁹ For example, in May 2014 Russia agreed on a major gas deal with China after ten years of negotiation. In addition, as Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev put it, Russia's shift of its economic development strategy onto the Asian-Pacific region is a 'natural response' to the development of global affairs, such as the Ukrainian crisis. He also added that 'our new Asian strategy is not just a senseless revenge to Europe but quite a logical development of events and a thoughtful response to the changing economic environment'.⁸⁴⁰

The rhetoric permeating such a geopolitical shift seems to suggest a marginalization of the West which is constructed as a second-ordered actor in international affairs still trying to implement its ineffective and old fashion strategy to plot against Russian national interests.

Coming back to the ED, wider political implications to broader EU-Russia relations can be drawn from the way in which energy relations between Russia and the EU are handled. The ED between the EU and Russia shows that these partners mutually constitute themselves as two potentially hostile geopolitical subjects. The positive image of the EU, so common for the Russian discourse of the mid-1990s, is transformed into the undifferentiated image of the West as the eternal enemy. Conversely, the European discourse is recreating the Cold War descriptions of Russia as an 'authoritarian state' with an undemocratic past, which lies in the backyard of Europe. Instead of a 'Europe whole and free', the scenario is that of a Europe divided into two, as it was during the Cold War.⁸⁴¹

With reference to the existing literature on broader EU-Russia energy relations, the liberal approach examines the relations under the prism of institutionalism and mutual interdependence. In particular, this strand put great emphasis on the existence of common interests, a market-based approach, linkages and spillover factors beyond energy relations. The EU 2004 enlargement – that included eight states from Central and Eastern Europe – historically dependent on Russia energy – indicates that the

⁸³⁹ T. Heritage and V. Soldatkin, Putin looks to Asia as West threatens to isolate Russia, Moscow: Reuters. Available from: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/03/21/us-ukraine-crisis-russia-insight-idUSBREA2K07S20140321> Accessed 27/09/2014

⁸⁴⁰ Global Times, Russian PM hails economic shift to Asia-Pacific as natural, logical, 19 September 2014. Available from: <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/882404.shtml> Accessed 27/09/2014

⁸⁴¹ Morozov, in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe's Future Energy Security*, p.59

degree of interdependence is now even more intense.⁸⁴² This interdependence is beneficial for both: Russia depends on stable long-term European demand while the EU depends on Russia's stable supply.⁸⁴³ Within this scenario, institutions are expected to consolidate the strategic relationship between the EU and Russia. Therefore, rather than conceiving the interdependence as problematic or as revealing the vulnerability of both actors – as a realist approach would do – convergence of common energy interests can trigger win-win cooperation. From this perspective, the ED was designed following this liberal-institutionalist approach and with the belief that the institutionalisation of the relationship would engender a constructive and successful energy dialogue between the EU and Russia.⁸⁴⁴

Yet, the prediction of a liberal-inspired reading of the ED seems disappointing. Despite this attempt to create a genuine partnership – through the creation of the early warning mechanism to notify the partner on gas disruption, and the EU-Russia Gas Advisory Council – the outcome of the ED is below expectations and has not eliminated misunderstandings or conflict. Agreements are limited to technical issues and to intangible long-term objectives, (common energy market between the EU and Russia) with no detailed guideline to achieve them.⁸⁴⁵ Conflicts remain on issues such as pipeline projects, transit, pricing, and definition of reciprocity.⁸⁴⁶

Conversely, in line with the broader critical constructivist/post-structuralist tradition, this chapter has tried to analyse the EU-Russia ED as a discursive relationship between Self and Other. This permits us to explain the formation of identity and interests not through a remote and anarchic structure nor through the undifferentiated notion of collective identity but through a relational process based on difference or similarities, framed by identity politics, supported by discourses and historically contextualized. The existing critical and discursive literature in this respect has the merit to introduce

⁸⁴² Johnson, *EU-Russia Energy Links: A Marriage of Convenience?*, pp.256-277

⁸⁴³ S., Yastrzhembsky, Trust, not double standards: What Russia expects from the EU, in Barysch, *Pipelines, Politics and Power. The Future of EU-Russia Energy Relations*, pp.35-39

⁸⁴⁴ Aalto, and Westphal, in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe's Future Energy Security*, p.13

⁸⁴⁵ Romanova, in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe's Future Energy Security*, pp. 63-93

⁸⁴⁶ Commission of the European Communities, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on security of energy supply and international cooperation. The EU Energy policy: engaging with partners beyond our borders, SEC(2011), 7 September, p. 8, quoted by Pick, *EU-Russia Energy Relations: A critical analysis*, p.336. Available from: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2011:1022:FIN:EN:PDF> Accessed 7/7/2013

discursive and identity-related factors to explain the ED.⁸⁴⁷ However, these analyses pay little attention to the ‘degree of sedimentation’ of the discourses under examination. Tichy and Kratochvil⁸⁴⁸, for example, only look at how specific energy discourses are constructed in the interaction but they fail to research the broader historical narratives that support these energy discourses. Conversely, the layered structure of this thesis enables us, for example, to understand that Putin’s insistence (or interest) on setting the ED on an equal basis is influenced by the historical narrative of pragmatic statism. In other words, the Wæverian structure provides a tool to explore the ‘degree of sedimentation’ of the energy discourses played out by the EU and Russia, that is, how energy discourses are constructed in the first place (historically). In fact, the existing literature fails to look at deeper layers (or level of ‘sedimentation’ of discourses) to fully explain how the discourses played out are constructed.

The proposed analysis contributes in this sense by constructing a layered structure that explains how the discursive practices employed by the EU and Russia in the ED derives from historical representations (layer one) and energy paradigms (layer two). In particular, Morozov has grasped how a struggle for ‘Europe’ underpins the politics around the ED.⁸⁴⁹ However, he assumes a situation of identity conflict between the EU and Russia in the ED and, thus, he fails to explain how the actors move from a scenario of declared cooperation to a confrontational one. In fact, an initial reading of the texts related to the ED suggests that both actors are willing to cooperate to take benefit from their mutual interdependence (Europe as a united continent or ‘white zone’). However, from a closer examination, the ‘degree of Otherness’ gradually widens because of the presence of the Eurocentric and Eurasianist narratives. The implication is that the counterpart gradually constructs themselves as confrontational ‘Others’ of Europe. Such a change in the mutual representations of actors towards the negative edge of the representational continuum (widening of the degree of Otherness) accounts for the identity conflict assumed by Prozorov and Morozov. It can be argued that the various possibilities of Otherness (partner/threat, Concert of Europe/divided Europe, dialogue/negotiation, mistrust/ trust) emerged from the historical encounter of actors (layer one) and their energy paradigms (layer two), contribute to explain actors’ positions and the

⁸⁴⁷ See for example Morozov in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe’s Future Energy Security*. See also Tichy and Kratochvil, *EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations*

⁸⁴⁸ Tichy and Kratochvil, *EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations*

⁸⁴⁹ Although not specifically on the ED, Prozorov shares with Morozov the intuition that conflict dispositions between EU and Russia on technical issues reveal a deeper struggle for ‘Europe’.

meaning of their discursive practices in the ED (layer three).

Finally, although Morozov seizes the fundamental contestation among competing political projects on 'Europe', this approach adds that, through such a discursive contestation, actors draw spatial boundaries in Europe and they mutually construct their spatial identity as 'European'. Similarly, it is added that actors also construct their temporal and ethical identity along the schemes of 'development' and 'responsibility' (e.g. mission to 'de-securitize' energy in Europe for European citizens).

In this respect, existing discourse-based accounts overlook the spatial, temporal, and ethical construction of actors' identity. As such, the focus on the construction of actors' identities as 'different' or 'similar' along the spatial, temporal and ethical dimensions represents a further contribution to the existing literature.

Chapter 7 – Conclusions

1 Introduction

In a context of dissatisfaction with current discourse-based and rationalist accounts, this research employed a critical constructivist/post-structuralist approach to the case of EU-Russia energy relations and aimed to explain what this energy relationship tells us about EU-Russia relations in general and about their political construction of 'Europe'. From this perspective, it is also argued that, to some extent, the energy relationship itself is framed by identity politics and interaction.

Much of the literature on this topic focuses on material and institutional aspects to explain actors' cooperative or confrontational positions in their energy relations, neglecting the ideational level that informs such a relationship. For example, mainstream rationalist traditions – (neo)-realism and (neo)-liberalism – explain energy security through material and institutional factors. (Neo)-realist studies generally describe EU-Russian energy relations through the lens of a cost-benefit analysis or through material factors such as the exploitation of energy potential and resources in Russia. Other neorealist-inspired approaches have illustrated how Russia's pragmatic use of energy is indicative of a zero-sum game with the EU, especially in Ukraine, Poland and the Baltics.⁸⁵⁰

(Neo)-liberal approaches, meanwhile, have focused on the institutional arrangements of the relationship to illustrate how material factors are translated into rules regulating the energy relationship between the two actors. Great emphasis is placed on the concepts of interdependence and institutionalization in the energy relations between these two actors.⁸⁵¹ By examining the degree of mutual / asymmetrical interdependence⁸⁵²,

⁸⁵⁰ See for example K. Barysch, *Russia, Realism and EU unity*, M., Light, *Keynote Article: Russia and the EU: Strategic Partners or Strategic Rivals?*, K.C., Smith, *Russian Energy Politics in the Baltics, Poland and Ukraine: A New Stealth Imperialism?*, quoted by Pick, *EU-Russia Energy Relations: A critical analysis*, p.323

⁸⁵¹ See for example Barysch, *Pipelines, Politics and Power. The Future of EU-Russia Energy Relations*

⁸⁵² See C., Paillard, *Rethinking Russia: Russia and Europe's Mutual Energy Dependence*, *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 63, 2010, pp. 65–84, quoted by Tichy, Kratochvil, *EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations*, p. 391

See P., Binhack, L., Tichy, *Asymmetric Interdependence in the Czech–Russian Energy Relations*, *Energy Policy* Vol. 45, 2012, pp. 54–63, quoted by Tichy, Kratochvil, *EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations*, p. 391

See Kaveshnikov, *The Issue of Energy Security in Relations Between Russia and the European Union*, quoted by Tichy, Kratochvil, *EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations*, p. 391

See F., Proedrou, *Sensitivity and Vulnerability Shifts and the New Energy Pattern in the EU–Russia Gas*

neoliberalism concludes that Russia is more dependent on the EU energy market than the EU is on gas supplies from Russia.

Another liberal-inspired strand, (so called 'transitionalist'), conceptualizes the EU's liberal approach to energy policy as the term of reference from which Russia has recently moved away.⁸⁵³ Other existing accounts between rationalism (especially neo-liberalism) and conventional constructivism, keep the assumption that the EU's liberal approach to energy policy is the benchmark from which Russia is moving away, but they provide historical insights regarding the origin of such an assumption, and conclude that the actors simply hold different understandings of energy security.⁸⁵⁴ However, the alleged difference between the identity of the EU and Russia is given and not examined.⁸⁵⁵

Existing discourse-based accounts on EU-Russia relations analyze the construction of competing energy discourses or how the different approaches of the EU and Russia are indicative of a struggle for 'Europe'. However, the dissatisfaction with these works arises from the fact that they either neglect the political implications underlying EU-Russia⁸⁵⁶ or they fail to explain how energy discourses between Self and Other are constructed in the first place (e.g. history).

Conversely, drawing from critical constructivism and post-structuralism and deploying a framework drawn from Wæver this research understood discourses as socially constructed and 'sedimented'. It also used the concept of 'Otherness' to illustrate how actors' positions alternate between cooperation and confrontation, rather than continually interacting in an assumed ever-present tension.

In this respect, this thesis studied EU-Russian energy relations as an intersubjective

Trade, *Studia Diplomatica*, Vol. 63, 2010, pp. 95–104, quoted by Tichy, Kratochvil, *EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations*, p. 391

⁸⁵³ See for example Correlje, van der Linde, *Energy Supply Security and Geopolitics: A European perspective*

See also Finon, and Locatelli, *Russian and European Gas and Interdependence: Could Contractual Trade Channel geopolitics?*

See also Yergin, *Ensuring energy security*

Erixson, *Europe's Energy Dependency and Russia's Commercial Assertiveness*

See also van der Meulen, *Gas Supply and EU-Russia Relations*

⁸⁵⁴ See Haukkala, *Lost in Translation? Why the EU has failed to influence Russia's development*

See also Youngs, *The EU's Role in World Politics: A Retreat from Liberal Internationalism*

See also Romanova, *The Russian Perspective on the Energy Dialogue*

See also Haukkala, *The Relevance of Norms and Values in the EU's Russia Policy*

Hadfield, *EU-Russia Energy Relations: Aggregation and Aggravation*

⁸⁵⁵ The critical reading also denies the liberal assumption that development of the relations between Russia and the EU is a priori conditioned by Russia's emulation of the values of contemporary Western European liberalism.

⁸⁵⁶ See for example, Tichy, Kratochvil, *EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations*

interaction between Self and Other, both advancing mutual discursive representations of each other. Such a conceptualization of the relationship as a Self / Other interaction sheds light on the role of ‘Otherness’ as factors underlying cooperative and conflicting positions of the actors. In this light, the main research question that this research has tried to answer was:

- *Can self-other discursive interactions explain the alternation between cooperative and conflicting positions in EU-Russia energy relations?*

The immediate answer to this question is that analyzing this relationship as a Self / Other discursive interaction enables the investigation of the ‘degrees of otherness’, a concept which ultimately explains the alternation between the cooperative and conflicting positions of the actors. The ‘degree of otherness’ tells us how alien the Self perceives the Other to be. In order to measure it, it is necessary to construct ‘Otherness’ and examine Self’s various representations in relation to the Other.

In fact, a given actor constructs ‘Otherness’ through discourses that include specific representations of the Self in relation to salient Others. To each of these representations corresponds a relatively broad or narrow ‘degree of Otherness’.

As such, this research identified a number of discursive representations from the historical encounter of Self with Other (layer one) and from the Self’s energy paradigm used in its relation with Other (layer two).

The historical narratives and energy paradigms detected in these two layers indicated the existence of a number of mutual representations that contributed to the construction of a representational continuum through which the ‘degree of otherness’ could be measured. The existence of the representations forming the continuum were then tested in the third dimension (layer three) related to the discursive practices of representatives of the EU and Russia in two cases pertaining to their mutual energy relations: the pipeline politics around the South Stream and Nabucco, and the EU-Russia ED.

The implication of such an examination sheds light not only on how the Self constructs the Other but also on how the Other holds constitutive power on the construction of Self’s identity. This arises from an understanding of energy security as something more than a mere exporter-importer relation or as a mere issue in EU-Russian relations but rather as impacting on the identity formation of the actors. As a result, this study leaves aside the technical, material and institutional aspects of the relationship, instead

focusing on the discursive framework – and on the representations included in each discourse – characterizing the energy relationship between the EU and Russia.

In particular, the three-layered structure elaborated by Ole Wæver has been the methodological tool that served to uncover the various layers of discourses and ultimately to construct the discursive structure. Chapter 3 (layer 1) focused on the historically ‘sedimented’ narratives (re)produced by the actors and showed how each of these narratives included a specific historical representation of the Self in relation to the Other. As noted, each historical representation unfolded a specific ‘degree of otherness’. For example, by claiming the superiority of the European civilization over others – including the Russian civilization – the Eurocentric narrative embodies a broad ‘degree of Otherness’ towards Russia. In addition, this layer illustrated how historical narratives and representations have changed over time and re-emerged in a revisited version with similarities and dissimilarities vis-à-vis the original narrative. For example, the exceptionalist and Westernizing narrative traditions in Russia not only alternated throughout history but they also both re-emerged in a slightly updated version as in the case of Eurasianism and neo-Eurasianism which belong to the broader Russian exceptionalist tradition.

Having established the basic narratives that framed the historical debate between Western Europe and Russia, Chapter 4 constructed layer 2 regarding the EU’s and Russia’s paradigms on energy security. It was illustrated how the ‘degree of otherness’ between the EU and Russia unfolds in the energy field. To do so, the chapter examined the Self’s energy security paradigm and focused on how relations with the Other are conceived in this paradigm. It was found that the EU’s and Russia’s understanding of energy security alternated between a market-based paradigm - ‘Market and Institution’ - and a geopolitical one - ‘Region and Empire’. It was also noted how historical representations of the Self in relation to the Other (layer 1) lay at the core of these energy paradigms. In line with the overall aim of the thesis, chapters 5 and 6 applied the discursive structure of layers 1 and 2 to the two case-studies. The aim was to explain the pipeline politics of South Stream vs Nabucco and the EU-Russia ED through the representational continuum and ‘degree of otherness’ identified in historical representations and in actors’ understanding of energy security.

Overall, the Wæverian structure represented a specific methodological contribution of this thesis to the existing discourse-based accounts. In fact it enabled the conceptualization of alternation among competing narratives, representations and energy paradigms, as a constant and as a key methodological principle manifest in each of the layers demonstrating, in this way, the ‘becoming’ nature of the proposed approach.

Having outlined the aims of the thesis the remainder of the chapter will first, discuss the empirical and theoretical contributions of studying EU-Russian energy relations through the discursive approach; that is, through concepts such as mutual recognition and the constitutive power of the outside. The implication resulting from the case-studies illustrates how a broader contestation occurred on the concept of ‘Europe’ between an EU-Europe and a Russian-Europe. As such, through their mutual energy relations, the EU and Russia not only reveal specific historical representations of the Other but also their political projects of ‘Europe’. As Neumann⁸⁵⁷ illustrated, there is a confrontation for Europe in which actors tend to oppose the ‘true’ Europe of the Self to the ‘false’ Europe of the Other. This dynamic can only be grasped through a discursive approach that believes in the incomplete nature of discourses (e.g. that on Europe) and opens the ground for antagonism over discursive hegemony.

The implications deriving from conceptualizing EU-Russia energy relation as a Self/Other discursive interaction, is that it permits us to analyze a) how Self’s interaction with Other impacts not only on the construction of Other but also on that of Self, b) and how energy is ultimately related to a broader contestation between the actors’ political projects on Europe. The second and final section discusses findings and limitations of the research. One of the main findings is that in specific contexts some approaches are less likely to be received well than others and, therefore, policy-makers should be sensitive to the identity projects / debates dominant in those to whom one’s policies are targeted.

As for limitations, the lack of Russian language skills has meant that the analysis has focused primarily on Western perspectives.

In addition, the fact that discourses are ‘unfinished’ by nature means that the very nature

⁸⁵⁷ Neumann, *Self and Other in International Relations*

of social reality is incomplete but contemporary in constant progress. However, it will be argued that such an ‘unfinished’ nature ultimately provides the ground for future research as it leaves the possibility to modify and progress the discursive framework elaborated in this study.

2 Theoretical and Empirical Contributions of the Thesis

From a theoretical perspective, this thesis prioritized the issue of recognition of political difference over the more technical issues pertaining to EU-Russian (energy) relations. Actors’ positions as cooperative or confrontational are ultimately linked to the issue of recognition rather than depending on policy divergence or convergence.

As noted, Self and Other acquire subjectivity through interaction. However, intersubjective interaction requires mutual recognition. From this perspective, Other’s entitlement to define the relationship of ‘Otherness’ depends on Self’s recognition of Other. If Self fails to recognize Other’s subjectivity, the latter can either accept such a lack of recognition as a legitimate political subject or choose to be excluded from the Self’s project and consequently open the contest with Self by proposing a competing project.⁸⁵⁸ In the latter case, Other acts as a subject without being recognized.

The desire for recognition as a particular type of subject (equal subject/partner), for example, seems to account for Russia’s refusal to ratify the ECT and ENP since what was on offer, from a Russian perspective, was recognition of a restricted level of subjectivity as a norm taker/learner. Russian reaction to the attempts within such EU’s policies to impose a subject-object relationship, reinforced and justified the reaffirmation of a Russian sovereignty discourse and a certain ambition to promote non-EU projects.⁸⁵⁹ For example, through the Eurasian Economic Union, Putin underlines his opposition to the EU-European project based on the acceptance of EU’s norms without a prospect of membership. In other words, faced with the lack of recognition deriving from the EU’s hierarchic integration, Russia avoids the position of policy-taker and rejects the proposed integration into the EU’s political space. Conversely, by

⁸⁵⁸ Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, p.2

⁸⁵⁹ Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*

drawing discursive power from its exceptionalist narrative, Russia prefers to enhance its focus towards the integration of the post-Soviet space into the Russian empire, with a view to create a political entity (e.g. Eurasian Union) that is seen as an equal or alternative to the EU. Similarly, Russia's intention to intensify and institutionalize bilateral (energy) relations with Asian countries – seen as less problematic than the EU – is indicative of dissatisfaction with the EU's conditions and triggers a dislocation of Russian identity from European to Eurasian. Through interaction with such a choosy Other (e.g. EU), Russia re-discovers its Eurasian Self, a Euro-Pacific nation that enjoys a great position to connect directly with the most important economic, technological, political, military actors in the world, loaded with the mission of keeping the right balance among them.⁸⁶⁰

However, recognition should occur on both sides. In fact, in the interaction process, Self's claims for its identity are not sufficient. This should be complemented by Other's recognition of the legitimacy of Self's claims.

In the intersubjective interaction the Other is empowered to impact on how 'Otherness' is defined.⁸⁶¹ For example, Russian requests to the EC for granting South Stream the status of project of 'European interest' epitomizes how Russia recognizes the EU as the legitimate power in Europe. The importance of Other's recognition resides in the fact that if this does not occur, the identity of Self is questioned and a new story needs to be told (e.g. constitutive power of outside).⁸⁶² For example, during his foreign policy speech in the German Bundestag in 2001, Putin – then in his first term – endorsed Russia's European choice as a way to seek equal recognition. He also called for a near-alliance with the US. Yet, despite such a promising position, the disappointing degree of recognition that the EU granted Russia might explain why Putin has dismissed that story.⁸⁶³ In a speech delivered at the Valdai Club in September 2013⁸⁶⁴, Putin in fact shifted to a more exceptionalist kind of narrative: Russia may be European, from an

⁸⁶⁰ D., Trenin, *Russia, a Euro-Pacific Nation*, Carnegie, 14 October 2013. Available from: <http://carnegie.ru/eurasiaoutlook/?fa=53293&lang=en#wholeanswer> Accessed 11/11/2013

⁸⁶¹ V., Morozov, Western hegemony, Global Democracy and the Russian Challenge, in Browning, Lehti, *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, pp. 185- 200, quoted by Browning, Christou, *The Constitutive Power of Outsiders: The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Dimension*, p. 109

⁸⁶² Browning, Christou, *The Constitutive Power of Outsiders: The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Dimension*, p.110

⁸⁶³ D., Trenin, *Russia, a Euro-Pacific Nation*, *Eurasia Outlook*, 14 October 2013. Available from: <http://carnegie.ru/eurasiaoutlook/?fa=53293&lang=en#wholeanswer> Accessed 11/11/2013

⁸⁶⁴ A., Malashenko, *Jubilee With Everything But The Unexpected*, Carnegie Moscow Centre, 26 September 2013. Available from: <http://carnegie.ru/eurasiaoutlook/?fa=53109> Accessed 11/11/2013

historical and cultural perspective, but it is not part of the Europe represented by the EU. It follows that, for Russia, the EU is no longer a teacher or a model.⁸⁶⁵

Similarly, the adherence to a renewed egalitarian discourse by the EU in the ED with Russia can be read as an attempt to tell a new story that is no longer based on the teacher-learner assumption since the Russian Other is now reluctant to hold a position of policy-recipient.

What all this indicates is that theoretically, for interaction to occur, Self and Other need to recognize their mutual identity claims. Thus, it can be said that lack of recognition is what might undermine the progress of their relations. Russia's revisionist stance might not result from aversion to the existing balance of power, but rather from the lack of recognition of Russia's Great Power status by the EU. In this light, rather than a lack of cooperation and institutionalization – as a neoliberal would argue – the scarce achievement reached so far in the ED, for example, might well result from a Russian perception that the EU's discourse does not fully recognize Russia's identity as equal.

To understand the extent to which Self recognizes Other, this thesis explored how boundaries between the two actors were drawn ('degree of otherness'). Therefore, great emphasis was put on the power of the margins. By applying such a theoretical framework to the empirical case studies, it was possible to understand how, in their mutual energy relations, the EU and Russia constructed 'Otherness' by drawing more or less deep boundaries between each other depending on the specific representation of Self in relation to Other.

Both the case studies demonstrate how the EU and Russia try to keep a narrow 'degree of otherness' through mutual positive representations where the Other is seen in friendly and benevolent terms rather than as an enemy. In both instances, there is an attempt to describe the Other as unproblematic (e.g. theme of co-existence in the Nabucco –South Stream case) and as an equal partner (e.g. ED).

However, as soon as the discursive practices denote a broadening of the 'degree of otherness', the margin acquires increasing explanatory power. In fact, it gradually becomes clear how despite initial claims, the EU does not grant friendship out of benevolence, but only on condition that the Russian Other recognizes the role of the EU as agenda-setter for 'Europe'. This arises from the Eurocentric legacy of Western

⁸⁶⁵ Trenin, *Russia, a Euro-Pacific Nation*

Europe that associates ‘Otherness’/‘non-Westernness’ as threatening or as a sign of underdevelopment. Similarly, Russia has demonstrated itself to be willing to cooperate with the EU-Other on condition that it is recognized as an equal partner. Similarly, from a Russian perspective, the narrative legacy is one that represents otherness/Western expression as a ‘threat’ that attempts to undermine Russia’s internal stability.

Overall, the presence of conditionality from both sides denotes the progressive broadening of the ‘degree of Otherness’ that ultimately results in the different understanding of ‘hierarchy’ and ‘sovereignty’.

In fact, in its relations with Russia, the EU tends to understand ‘hierarchy’ and ‘sovereignty’ in unequal terms by posing itself in the position of a benevolent teacher who sets down universally valid prescriptions for Other’s development. Conversely, in its relations with the EU, Russia challenges the EU’s understanding of ‘hierarchy’ and ‘sovereignty’ by adding an egalitarian characterization. This dynamic occurs also in the energy field with consequences on the constitutive power of the outside. Especially in the case of the ED, Russia adheres to the belief that only great and sovereign powers should deal with salient issues⁸⁶⁶ – such as energy – in non-hierarchical terms.⁸⁶⁷

The Russian emphasis on an equal (energy) relationship with the EU to preserve Russian sovereignty contributes not only to the depiction of the EU as an equal Great Power to Russian unity but reinforces Russian ambition to emerge as a Great Power in the international arena.

Similarly, by indicating the need for Russia to look at EU energy standards as a reference, the EU not only describes its counterpart as a ‘learner’, a potential ‘threat’ and ‘inferior’ but it consequently also depicts itself as a ‘teacher’, ‘harmless’, and ‘superior’.

Overall, such different understandings of hierarchy and sovereignty disprove the initial claims of mutual co-existence (Nabucco-South Stream) and partnership (ED). As noted, this is indicative of a broadening of the ‘degree of Otherness’ that consequently emerges as the conceptual tool explaining how actors’ positions shift from cooperation to confrontation.

⁸⁶⁶ Aalto, *Russia’s Quest for International Society and the Prospects for Regional-Level International Societies*, p.464

⁸⁶⁷ From a Russian perspective, hierarchy and sovereignty come closer to the EU’s understanding only in Russia’s relations with ex-Soviet countries that are seen as a source to fuel Russian ‘greatness’ (see for example Gazprom’s acquisition of Moldovan and Ukrainian energy infrastructure).

It follows that in the measurement of the extraneousness between Self and Other, 'Otherness' should not be seen only as threatening/confrontational or only as cooperative.⁸⁶⁸ In the case of Russia, part of the existing literature that examines the role of the constitutive 'West' for Russian identity tends to portray the concept of the 'West' as an absolute negation which permits the Russian Self to be constituted.⁸⁶⁹ The 'West' – in the forms of the US, Western Europe or, NATO – is usually described as the major antagonist of Russia in the zero-sum geopolitical game for international or European hegemony, as well as the main source of threat, either material (e.g. military and economic) or normative (e.g. 'westernization').

Similarly, in the battle for Europe, Russia comes to be represented as the negative Other of the EU in both geopolitical (e.g. expansion of the Russian sphere of influence to the detriment of the EU's) and civilizational terms (e.g. Russia plots to erode Western cultural hegemony). Against this background, another theoretical implication deriving from the 'degree of otherness' is that Others can be friends and partners as well as enemies. For example, the empirical chapters 5 and 6 showed that the egalitarian and 'non-exclusive' themes have informed part of the discursive strategy of the EU and Russia in the ED and the Nabucco-South Stream politics. In short, the Other is not necessarily constituted in radicalised terms or as the 'rival' to oppose but it can also be depicted as a 'partner'.

As such, the 'degree of otherness' should be imagined as a spectrum that has at its extremes radical confrontation on one side, and partnership and cooperation on the other side. However, a number of intermediate possibilities beyond the mere enemy-friend dichotomy⁸⁷⁰ – such as superiority, emulation, threat – lie between these extremes. Therefore, the qualitative value of 'Otherness' can vary. For example, the Russian Westernizing tradition and the Western European narrative of 'Russia as land of the future' go beyond the mere identification of the Other as simply negative Other and

⁸⁶⁸ Connolly, *Taylor, Foucault and Otherness*, p. 371, quoted by Browning, Christou, *The Constitutive Power of Outsiders: The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Dimension*, p.110

See also Neumann, *Identity and Security*, p. 223 quoted by Browning, Christou, *The Constitutive Power of Outsiders: The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Dimension*, p.110

Neumann, *Identity and Security*, p. 223 quoted by Browning, Christou, *The Constitutive Power of Outsiders: The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Dimension*, p.110

⁸⁶⁹ See Yanovsky and Lotman quoted by in Morozov, *Inside/Outside. Europe and the Boundaries of Russian Political Community*, p.7, (see notes 21 and 22)

⁸⁷⁰ See for example Browning, Christou, *The Constitutive Power of Outsiders: The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Dimension*, p. 110

they also assign it a qualitative value; Other is respectively a model to emulate or an actor endowed with enormous spiritual and material resources. Similarly, themes such as ‘Russia’s return to Europe’⁸⁷¹ and the Western European ‘Concert of Europe’ entail discourses that represent Western Europe and Russia as different but ultimately united by the same European experience and belonging to the same world’s narrative on Europe. In these themes, the concept of Europe – meant as the European continent - is used as a reference to indicate a common ground and, thus, is characterized by a narrower ‘degree of otherness’.

The concept of ‘Europe’ further demonstrated how the degree of otherness can vary. Empirically, the case studies proved how Europe was a battlefield for a struggle on discursive hegemony. Drawing from Morozov’s standpoints, energy relations between the EU and Russia are more than a conflict over technical issues but are also an identity-based conflict and ultimately a contestation for Europe. This epitomizes how issues of recognition of political difference and similarity ultimately are at the core of technical conflicts.⁸⁷² However, the proposed approach represents a progression from Morozov’s and other discourse-based accounts because – through the ‘degree of Otherness’ – it explains how actors’ positions move from cooperation to confrontation through the politics around these two case-studies, rather than assuming the conflict a priori between the two competing projects on Europe.

Similarly, the case study on the Nabucco-South Stream politics illustrated how it goes beyond mere technical competition between two pipelines and reveals a deeper contest between two political projects of Europe: the EU-Europe with less Russian influence, and the Russian-Europe with Russia having a pivotal role or an equal say in European affairs to the detriment of the EU. Despite the material interests of actors, the politics revolving around Nabucco and South Stream can thus be read as the Russian attempt to challenge the EU’s hegemonic political discourse and as the EU’s attempt to reiterate its hegemonic discourse on energy security in Europe.

In this respect, a further implication of this research regards a ‘Europe’ that turns out to be a third signifier in the context of the energy relations between the EU and Russia. In Russian discourse, ‘Europe’ is an ‘irreducible signifier’ – neither fully incorporated into

⁸⁷¹ See for example the Gorbachev’s discourse on the ‘Common European Home’

⁸⁷² See also Morozov, in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe’s Future Energy Security*, p. 43

See Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*, pp.2-3

the Self's political space, nor fully rejected into the outside⁸⁷³ - or an 'empty signifier' – an ambiguous entity with fuzzy borders that can be used as needed for meaning-making.⁸⁷⁴ This means that Russia perceives a 'European calling' only partially. On one side, any prospect of definitive exclusion triggers alarms of being relegated 'in the backyard of Europe'.⁸⁷⁵

On the other side, Russia has little power to impact on the meaning of 'Europe' since the EU (and Western Europe) has managed to impose a hegemonic discourse which depicts itself as the legitimate embodiment of Europe and Europeanness. From a Western European perspective, Europe can be defined as a 'reducible signifier' – an entity entirely incorporated into the Self – or a 'full signifier' – an entity with clear borders and bearing a single universal meaning.

The concept of 'Europe' emerged as a beneficial dimension also with regard to the actors' construction of their spatial identity. In the case studies proposed, spatiality highlighted how the EU and Russia draw their boundaries in Europe. For example, claims of co-existence and cooperation from representatives of the EU and Russia in the Nabucco-South Stream pipeline politics as well as in the ED demonstrated a spatial understanding of Europe as a united continent with no clear boundaries ('white zone'). This means that the two actors seem to position themselves on the point of the representational continuum that describes them as European partners. This specific point is, in addition, indicative of a narrow 'degree of Otherness'.

However, as discursive practices denote confrontational dispositions, dividing lines progressively emerge in the spatial understanding of Europe that, consequently, constitutes a 'grey' or even 'red' zone, depending on how broad the 'degree of Otherness' is. For example, Russia's position in the Nabucco-South Stream politics moves from common Europeanness (white zone), to exceptionalism (grey zone) and aversion towards the EU (red zone).

The spatial dimension is complemented by temporal identity that is constructed through a comparison between Self and Other around the temporal schemes of 'development' and 'stasis'. For example, in the case of the ED, the references in the EU's discursive practices calling for Russia to improve its energy standards portrayed Russia as a

⁸⁷³ Morozov, *Inside/Outside. Europe and the Boundaries of Russian Political Community*, p.8

⁸⁷⁴ Makarychev *Russia's Discursive Construction of Europe and Herself: Towards New Spatial Imaginery*

⁸⁷⁵ Rogov, *Nasha strana mozhet okazat'sia na zadvorkakh Evropy*, quoted by Morozov, *Inside/Outside. Europe and the Boundaries of Russian Political Community*, p.8 (note 25)

country that needs modernization. In doing so, the EU constructs both its temporal identity as a ‘developed’ actor as well as Russian identity as a ‘developing’ Other. At the same time, the Russian-Other supported the construction of the EU-Self and its policy principles as more advanced.

The third dimension relates to the construction of actors’ identity in ethical terms. In particular, it focused on the construction of responsibility and the sense of mission that actors deploy in their discursive practices. The articulation of ethical identity looked at the discursive construction of ethics, morality, and responsibility. For example, the sense of responsibility and necessity that Russian representatives attached to the construction of South Stream in their discursive practices (e.g. speeches, statements) are indicative of a sense of mission that Russia feels to supply Southern Europe, and contributes to constructing Russia as an ethical and ‘true’ European actor.

Overall, in the light of the objective to demonstrate that the energy relationship is framed by identity politics and interaction, this thesis tried to assign a political character to identity. This has been done by exploring the spatial, temporal and ethical dimension of the identities of Self and Other. From this perspective, the proposed account represents a progression from existing discourse-based approaches as it focuses on the way in which these three dimensions of identity construction interrelate. This interrelation, once again, contributes to an understanding that actors’ positions move from cooperation and confrontation depending on how Self perceives the Other to be alien in spatial, temporal and ethical terms. From this perspective, rather than only recognizing two constructions of identity as ‘different’, there is a focus on how this difference is spatially, temporally and ethically situated.⁸⁷⁶

Furthermore, in this light, the research contributes to two existing bodies of literature: the critical renderings on EU-Russia relations and the specific discourse-based literature on EU-Russia energy relations.⁸⁷⁷ In general terms, while using discourses, both the above-mentioned strands failed to adequately examine the ‘degree of sedimentation’ of the energy discourses under examination by only focusing on energy paradigms (layer

⁸⁷⁶ Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, pp. 46-51

⁸⁷⁷ On the specific discourse-based literature see Morozov, in Aalto, *The EU–Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe’s Future Energy Security*
See also Tichy, Kratochvil, *EU and Russian Discourse on Energy Relations*
See also Khasson, *Discourses and Interests in EU-Russia Energy Relations*

two) and discursive practices (layer three). In fact, the discourse-based literature on energy focuses extensively on energy paradigms and discursive practices, and it thus pays little attention to the influence of historical narratives. In other words, energy discourses are not historically contextualised within the framework of EU-Russia relations. To address this gap, as noted, this research employed Waever's layered structure that established three levels on which the 'sedimentation' of each discourse can be studied. This allowed a more in depth exploration of how discourses are constructed in the first place, that is, how the EU and Russia have constructed – throughout history – the narrative/story they tell about their identity.

In addition, in order to produce new empirical data, this thesis applied the concept of 'Otherness' to explain the Nabucco-South Stream pipeline politics and the EU-Russia ED. In doing so, such an approach ultimately contributes to exploring the political implications deriving from the conceptualization of EU-Russia energy relations as an interaction of layered – not assumed – identities and their discourses. Existing studies, in fact, fail to illustrate the broader political implications of energy for wider EU-Russia relations. In particular, the majority of critical and post-structuralist accounts on the relations between EU and Russia have applied the theoretical apparatus of critical and post-structuralist approaches – such as mutual identity formation, political recognition, 'degree of Otherness', discursive contest, and the struggle for Europe – to a limited number of case-studies such as the Northern Dimension Initiative (NDI), ENP, the Kaliningrad *enclave*, and the visa regime.⁸⁷⁸ This thesis demonstrated how such a theoretical apparatus sheds light on some political implications deriving from energy relations between the EU and Russia. Finally, as noted, the reliance on the Waeverian layered structure and the investigation of political subjectivity in spatial, temporal and ethical terms adds specific value to the critical and post-structuralists works on the relations between EU and Russia.

3 The Implications and Value of the Research

⁸⁷⁸ Prozorov, *The Structure of the EU Russian Conflict Discourse: Issues and Identity Conflicts in the Narratives of Exclusion and Self-Exclusion*

See also, Browning, *The Region-Building Approach Revisited: The Continued Othering of Russia in Discourses of Region-Building in the European North*

The value of this research is to have contextualized the discursive structure and illustrated the implications of studying energy relations between EU and Russia as a Self / Other interaction. The first finding emerging from the two case studies is that actors' positions – cooperation/partnership and confrontation/conflict – alternate with consequences on the spatial, temporal and ethical construction of actors' identities. Therefore, actors' positions are not fixed but cooperation or confrontation alternate on the basis of Self's representation in relation to the Other. The alternation depends on the extent to which Self's discourses depict Other to be alien ('degree of otherness'). The measurement of 'Otherness' unfolds in historical terms (layer one), and in energy paradigms that the EU and Russia played out in their mutual energy relations (layer two).

This begs the question of why actors alternate their positions. The rationalist answer would be that ultimately these discourses are just deployed in the service of material interests. To properly challenge this position, it should be remembered that ultimately there is a power relationship underlying the discursive interaction. Power is not merely material (e.g. military) but can also be understood in ideational terms as the capacity to impose one's discourse as dominant. Thus, actors should be seen as constantly seeking to establish their discourse as 'dominant' over Other's discourse. In fact, if Other's discourse does not conform to the Self's, the latter would seek a new discursive strategy to downplay Other's competing discourse or discredit it before its audience. As a consequence, Other would react to avoid Self's submission and establish its discourse as dominant.

In the context of this thesis, it has been noted how Russia has often rejected any discursive practice of EU's representatives that called for an approximation of its energy legislation to the EU's one. An eventual acceptance from Russia would imply a recognition of the EU as the embodiment of the 'true' Europe that has the discursive power to set the energy governance of the entire continent.

As noted, conventional constructivism and rationalism do not adequately justify the complexity of the power relations between the EU and Russia. They simply assume the materiality of the power relationship and the consequent opposition of two actors (rationalism) who simply hold different identities (conventional constructivism). These two last assumptions represent another key critique of this thesis to rationalism and conventional constructivism. By relying on the deconstructive method, this thesis tried to challenge conventional representations that analysts have often used to account for

EU- Russia (energy) relations. This, for example, translates into the deconstruction of the EU's image as a 'benevolent' player driven by its values and multilateral identity, and that of Russia as a 'threat' to multilateral cooperation.

Rather it has been noted how the EU as also acted as a modern actor that prefers geopolitics over market-based solutions (e.g. 'Gazprom clause'). Similarly, in various phases of her history Russia has successfully projected the image of a contemporary Great Power willing to cooperate with the West against global terrorism, and through multilateralism and equality in the energy field.⁸⁷⁹

Another finding demonstrated that Self's interaction with Other has implications not only for the construction of Other but also for that of Self. It can be seen that behind the public and benevolent rhetoric of their energy discourses, the EU and Russia are mutually constituting themselves as two competing, and potentially hostile, European actors. On the Russian side, the positive image of the EU gradually becomes associated with the 'West', which is historically an antagonistic entity in Russian imaginary. On the other side, the EU's Eurocentric discourse is recreating the Cold War image of Russia as a 'learner' that lies in the backyard of Europe. Rather than a 'Europe whole and free', the two actors are in competition for hegemony on 'Europe'. This is pretty much the same political situation as during the Cold War.⁸⁸⁰ As a result, from the energy-related case studies it emerges that behind the public and benevolent rhetoric, the Russian political project of 'Europe' is in continuous interaction and eventually in contestation with the EU-Europe one.

Finally, what emerges from this research is that in specific contexts some approaches are less likely to be received well than others and, therefore, the analysis highlights the need to be sensitive to the identity projects/debates dominant in those to whom one's policies are targeted. In other words, for the inception of specific energy policies, a policy-maker should assess the extent to which the energy governance of the entity he represents differs from that implemented by another actor ('degree of Otherness'). This difference or similarity in governance emerges a) from the dominant historical narratives at play in Self's relation with Other (layer 1), and b) from the identification of Self's energy security paradigm which indicates how the relation with Other in the energy field is conceived. If such an investigation is conducted, the result is that some policy options are more viable than others simply because they are more likely to be

⁸⁷⁹ See for example the exploration agreements with American oil companies in the 1990s.

⁸⁸⁰ Morozov, in Aalto, *The EU-Russian Energy Dialogue: Europe's Future Energy Security*, p.59

accepted and recognized by the counterpart than others. This explains why, rather than a simple clash of material interests, the EU's ambition to get Russia to embark on approximating its legislation and practices to the EU *acquis communautaire* – that could work with a pro-Western narrative in Russia – is no longer valid because Putin's new discourse recognizes Russia as a Great Power, whereas the West is an equal partner with no right to interfere in the internal affairs of other Great Powers.

3.1 Reflection on the Limitations and Agenda for Future Research

As previously underlined, one of the strengths that allows a discursive methodology to overcome the limitations of conventional constructivism is the focus on the linguistic aspect of interaction. The advantage of the linguistic element is that it makes actors' interests accessible. In fact, actors enunciate their interests in the form of policy documents or public speech; that is, through language. Each narrative tradition and paradigm found in the layers encompasses specific interests and beliefs which are expressed through language.

Through interaction, actors' interests are also continually shaped through language rather than given a priori as a rationalist account would hold. The emphasis in discourse analysis on the importance of language means that linguistic abilities are crucial. Translations can be useful to examine original texts. However, speaking a language is not only a linguistic ability, it is also a social epistemology encompassing the knowledge of specific codes and nuances. Therefore, the same word can have one meaning in English and a different one in Russian. In this light, the choice of a discursive encounter combined with a comparative Self-Other study is influenced by pragmatic questions of linguistic abilities. In fact, in order to conduct a comprehensive discursive encounter, the researcher usually needs to know the language of the Self as well as the encountered Other. On the one side, the EU is a collective actor comprised of various nation states and at times represented by a multilingual institutional framework. In addition, for most of its members and civil servants English is a second language. However, this thesis only examines official documents of the EU institutions published in English. In short, it is assumed that the EU institutions speak in English.

On the other side, the absence of Russian skills makes it imperative to rely on official texts translated into English. However, this is possible only for the analysis of the Russian position in layer three⁸⁸¹ which focuses on official documents and speeches (discursive practices).⁸⁸² Conversely, the reliance on academic writings in English for the investigation of layers one and two means that this research employs the process of discourse encounter as mainly interpreted from a Western perspective. In other words, given the lack of Russian skills, the historical narrative and energy paradigms of both EU (Western Europe) and Russia are gleaned from texts belonging to a Western political debate and available in English.

In addition, questions of access to material documenting the Russian discourse need to be considered for future studies. This research relied only on the official documents of the Russian government available in English and on a few secondary sources specializing on Russian politics (e.g. Ria Novosti) and translated into English. Therefore, future research in this area can be improved by engaging in a more balanced discourse analysis that examines the discourses of Self and Other adding a Russian perspective. To do so, it is necessary to be able to read Russian and possibly conduct field research in a Russian-speaking environment to access documents in the original language. This allows the exploration of energy relations without the bias of language intruding.

A further methodological weakness regards the reliability of discourse analysis. The Wæverian layered structure of this research relied on a specific selection of texts to map the debates. In other words, the mutual narratives of Self and Other identified in the historical interaction between Western Europe and Russia derived from secondary sources such as books, scholarly journals and on-line material. The second and third layers drew from a number of secondary as well as primary sources such as official speeches and documents, and press releases. The fact that the selection of texts may vary is at the same time the limitation and the lynchpin of the proposed approach. In fact, if a similar discourse analysis were to be conducted using the same texts, it is not guaranteed that the findings would be identical.

On this basis, one might contest the validity of the proposed discourse-based account over more interest-based ones. However, this research did not aim to discard the

⁸⁸¹ Only partially for layer two.

⁸⁸² For the construction of the Russian position in the Nabucco-South Stream pipeline politics and ED, this thesis relied on the English translations of speeches and official documents written in Russian.

material character of the energy relations between the EU and Russia. Instead, the objective was to illustrate the deeper discursive contest behind the materiality. In short, the thesis aimed to demonstrate the political meaning of actors' pursuit of their energy interests through discourse.

The political implications that emerge from conceptualizing EU-Russia energy relations as a Self / Other discursive interaction are that a deeper discursive contest underlies EU-Russia energy relations. Such a contest sheds light on the mutual construction of actors' identity, and on their construction of 'Europe' as a political project.

Another related limitation regards the selection of the case-studies and in particular the extent to which the type and number of cases studies can lead to general conclusions about EU-Russia energy relations. The original reason why these two cases were selected is because the literature commonly explains them by looking at actors' interests. This thesis, however, aimed to uncover the discursive structure informing the debate around the two case studies by relying on specific representations derived from actors' historical encounters and from their mutual energy policy. However, the link between generalization (micro level) and case studies (macro level) can be problematic in complex relations such as that between the EU and Russia. In other words, the discursive framework as well as the representations identified in layer one and two (macro level) might not necessary be valid to explain other cases pertaining to EU-Russia (energy) relations (micro level). For example, in the case of energy infrastructure, the debate around the need to protect critical energy infrastructure from terrorist and cyber attacks represents a common goal in which actors are unlikely to move from cooperation to open confrontational positions. While this is true, it can be noted that the proposed interpretations of the case studies of this thesis provide working hypotheses that may be suitable for other cases if the 'fit' is reasonably compatible. The fact that knowledge cannot be automatically generalized does not imply that it cannot contribute to knowledge accumulation in a given field.⁸⁸³

Moreover, the creation of each narrative / paradigm is subject to the researcher's interpretation and to the material he has accessed. Therefore, the discursive structure presented in this research offers a lens to read the interaction but it is only one among

⁸⁸³ B., Flyvbjerg, Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research, *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 12, No. 2, April 2006, pp. 219-245

other possibilities. However, there is strong academic evidence regarding the existence of certain frames of thinking on which this thesis draws. In particular, this thesis refers to a well worn tradition about Western European / EU and Russian identities especially in the historical chapter three (e.g. see Russia's exceptionalism on one side, and the Western European idea of 'Concert of Europe' on the other side).

Future research in this area can, thus, draw from this initial discursive framework and widen the scope of the identified narratives / paradigms by analyzing other texts to discover new or sub-narratives / paradigms that can explain more accurately specific dynamics of the (energy) interaction between EU and Russia. As such, the discursive framework proposed can be applied to explain other cases pertaining to EU-Russia energy relations, and can be enlarged or narrowed down to create different and wider narratives or paradigms that might have been overlooked. Or, it can even be contested as the analysis of new texts opens the ground for different interpretations. As noted, this possibility arises from the impossibility of discourses to achieve permanent hegemony. In a way, the incomplete nature of discourses permits the exploration of other discursive structures, therefore, it is the weakness and, at the same time, the strength of this approach.

The impossibility of closure implies that the unity of a discourse and its very existence is neither self-evident nor necessarily found by each analysis that engages with the same texts. The researcher needs to infer unity from the textual material accessed. In this thesis, the unity of a discourse has been derived from the continued interplay and reiteration of certain descriptions and features found in a specific discourse produced throughout history. For example, Russian sub-narratives such as Slavophilism, Panslavism and Eurasianism that focused on themes such as 'Russian particularism' and 'Russia as Great Power' provided ground for claiming the existence of a united and broader 'exceptionalist' narrative in Russia.

Yet, unity does not tell us where the signifying practice of a specific discourse terminates and another begins, as discourses are incomplete. To address this weakness it is necessary to postulate that the limits of a discourse are to be found within the discourse itself by exploring how, in a particular discourse, the boundaries are drawn.

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